

J. M. Lewis



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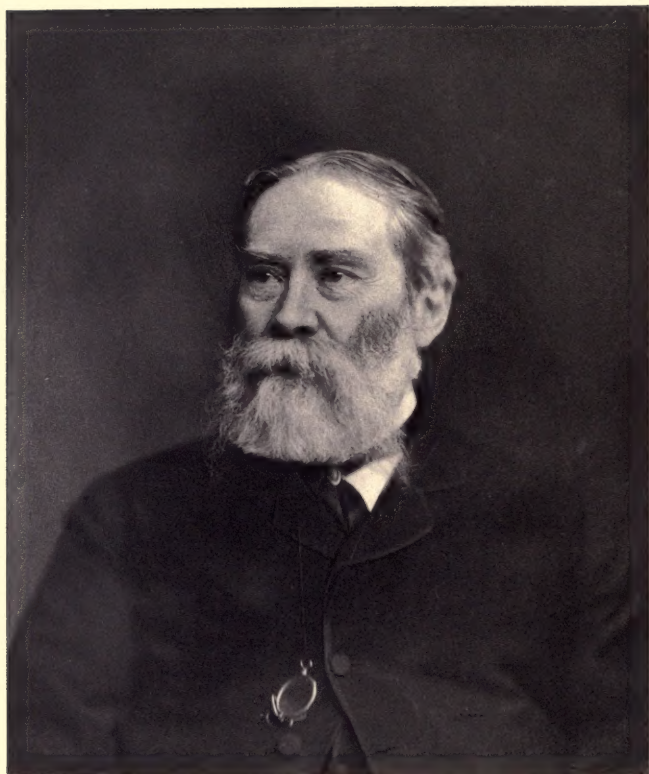
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*J. M. Lowell.*



Autograph Poets

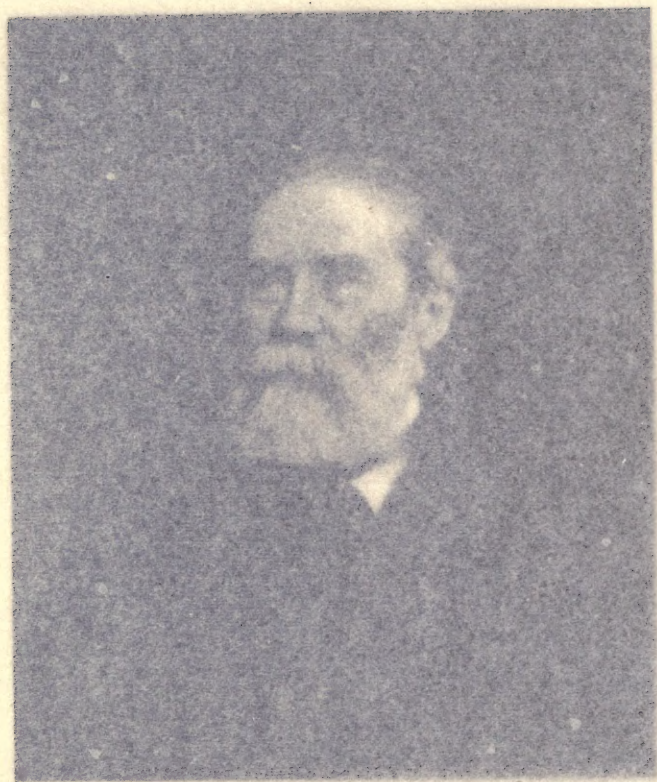
THE COMPLETE  
POETICAL WORKS OF  
JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL



HOUGHTON

The Riverside Press

1916



*M. Lowell*



Autograph Poets

THE COMPLETE  
POETICAL WORKS OF  
JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL



BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

*The Riverside Press Cambridge*

1910

Autograph Books

THE COMPLETE  
POETICAL WORKS OF  
JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

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kindled his spirit and gave force and direction to a character which was ready to respond, and yet might otherwise have delayed active expression. They were not married until 1844; but they were not far apart in their homes, and during these years Lowell was making those early ventures in literature, and first raids upon political and moral evil, which foretold the direction of his later work, and gave some hint of its abundance.

About the time of his marriage, he published two books which, by their character, show pretty well the divided interest of his life. His bent from the beginning was more decidedly literary than that of any contemporary American poet. That is to say, the history and art of literature divided his interest with the production of literature, and he carried the unusual gift of a rare critical power, joined to hearty spontaneous creation. It may indeed be guessed that the keenness of judgment and incisiveness of wit which characterize his examination of literature sometimes interfered with his poetic power, and made him liable to question his art when he would rather have expressed it unchecked. One of the two books was a volume of poems; the other was a prose work, *Conversations on Some of the Old Poets*. He did not keep this book alive; but it is interesting as marking the enthusiasm of a young scholar treading a way then almost wholly neglected in America, and intimating a line of thought and study in which he afterward made most noteworthy venture. Another series of poems followed in 1848, and in the same year *The Vision of Sir Launfal*. Perhaps it was in reaction from the marked sentiment of his poetry that he issued now a *jeu d'esprit*, *A Fable for Critics*, in which he hit off, with a rough and ready wit, the characteristics of the writers of the day, not forgetting himself.

The portrait of himself, thus drawn, is but half serious, and it touches but a single feature; others can say better that Lowell's ardent nature showed itself in the series of satirical poems which made him famous, *The Biglow Papers*, written in a spirit of indignation and fine scorn, when the Mexican War was causing many Americans to blush with shame at the use of the country by a class for its own ignoble ends. Lowell and his wife, who brought a fervid anti-slavery temper as part of her marriage portion, were both contributors to the *Liberty Bell*; and Lowell was a frequent contributor to the *Anti-Slavery Standard*, and was, indeed, for a while a corresponding editor. In June, 1846,

there appeared one day in the *Boston Courier* a letter from Mr. Ezekiel Biglow of Jaalam to the editor, Hon. Joseph T. Buckingham, inclosing a poem of his son, Mr. Hosea Biglow. It was no new thing to seek to arrest the public attention with the vernacular applied to public affairs. Major Jack Downing and Sam Slick had been notable examples, and they had many imitators; but the reader who laughed over the racy narrative of the unlettered Ezekiel, and then took up Hosea's poem and caught the gust of Yankee wrath and humor blown fresh in his face, knew that he was in at the appearance of something new in American literature. The force which Lowell displayed in these satires made his book at once a powerful ally of an anti-slavery sentiment, which heretofore had been ridiculed.

A year in Europe, 1851-52, with his wife, whose health was then precarious, stimulated his scholarly interests, and gave substance to his study of Dante and Italian literature. In October, 1853, his wife died; she had borne him three children: the first-born, Blanche, died in infancy; the second, Walter, also died young; the third, a daughter, Mrs. Burnett, survived her parents. In 1855 he was chosen successor to Longfellow as Smith Professor of the French and Spanish Languages and Literature and Professor of Belles Lettres in Harvard College. He spent two years in Europe in further preparation for the duties of his office, and in 1857 was again established in Cambridge and installed in his academic chair. He married, also, at this time Miss Frances Dunlap, of Portland, Maine.

Lowell was now in his thirty-ninth year. As a scholar, in his professional work, he had acquired a versatile knowledge of the Romance languages, and was an adept in old French and Provençal poetry; he had given a course of twelve lectures on English poetry before the Lowell Institute in Boston, which had made a strong impression on the community, and his work on the series of *British Poets* in connection with Professor Child, especially his biographical sketch of Keats, had been recognized as of a high order. In poetry he had published the volumes already mentioned. In general literature he had printed in magazines the papers which he afterward collected into his volume, *Fire-side Travels*. Not long after he entered on his college duties, *The Atlantic Monthly* was started, and the editorship given to him. He held the office for a year or two only; but he continued to write for the magazine, and in 1862 he was associated with Mr. Charles Eliot

Norton in the conduct of *The North American Review*, and continued in this charge for ten years. Much of his prose was contributed to this periodical. Any one reading the titles of the papers which comprise the volumes of his prose writings will readily see how much literature, and especially poetic literature, occupied his attention. Shakespeare, Dryden, Lessing, Rousseau, Dante, Spenser, Wordsworth, Milton, Keats, Carlyle, Percival, Thoreau, Swinburne, Chaucer, Emerson, Pope, Gray, — these are the principal subjects of his prose, and the range of topics indicates the catholicity of his taste.

In these papers, when studying poetry, he was very alive to the personality of the poets, and it was the strong interest in humanity which led Lowell, when he was most diligent in the pursuit of literature, to apply himself also to history and politics. Several of his essays bear witness to this, such as *Witchcraft, New England Two Centuries Ago, A Great Public Character* (Josiah Quincy), *Abraham Lincoln*, and his great *Political Essays*. But the most remarkable of his writings of this order was the second series of *The Biglow Papers*, published during the war for the Union. In these, with the wit and fun of the earlier series, there was mingled a deeper strain of feeling and a larger tone of patriotism. The limitations of his style in these satires forbade the fullest expression of his thought and emotion; but afterward in a succession of poems, occasioned by the honors paid to student soldiers in Cambridge, the death of Agassiz, and the celebration of national anniversaries during the years 1875 and 1876, he sang in loftier, more ardent strains. The most famous of these poems was his noble Commemoration Ode.

It was at the close of this period, when he had done incalculable service to the republic, that Lowell was called on to represent the country, first in Madrid, where he was sent in 1877, and then in London, to which he was transferred in 1880. Eight years were thus spent by him in the foreign service of the country. He had a good knowledge of the Spanish language and literature when he went to Spain; but he at once took pains to make his knowledge fuller and his accent more perfect, so that he could have intimate relations with the best Spanish men of the time. In England he was at once a most welcome guest, and was in great demand as a public speaker. No one can read his dispatches from Madrid and London without being struck by his sagacity, his readiness in emergencies, his interest in and quick percep-



tion of the political situation in the country where he was resident, and his unerring knowledge as a man of the world. Above all, he was through and through an American, true to the principles which underlie American institutions. His address on *Democracy*, which he delivered in England, is one of the great statements of human liberty. A few years later, after his return to America, he gave another address to his own countrymen on *The Place of the Independent in Politics*. It was a noble defense of his own position, not without a trace of discouragement at the apparently sluggish movement in American self-government of recent years, but with that faith in the substance of his countrymen which gave him the right to use words of honest warning.

The public life of Mr. Lowell made him more of a figure before the world. He received honors from societies and universities; he was decorated by the highest honors which Harvard could pay officially; and Oxford and Cambridge, St. Andrews and Edinburgh and Bologna, gave him gowns. He established warm personal relations with Englishmen, and, after his release from public office, he made several visits to England. There, too, was buried his wife, who died in 1885. The closing years of his life in his own country, though touched with domestic loneliness and diminished by growing physical infirmities that predicted his death, were rich also with the continued expression of his large personality. He delivered the public address in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of Harvard University; he gave a course of lectures on the Old English Dramatists before the Lowell Institute; he collected a volume of his poems; he wrote and spoke on public affairs; and, the year before his death, revised, rearranged, and carefully edited a definitive series of his writings in ten volumes. He died at Elmwood, August 12, 1891. Since his death three small volumes have been added to his collected writings, and Mr. Norton has published *Letters of James Russell Lowell*, in two volumes.



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## EARLIER POEMS.

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### THRENODIA.

GONE, gone from us! and shall we see  
Those sibyl-leaves of destiny,  
Those calm eyes, nevermore?  
Those deep, dark eyes so warm and  
bright,  
Wherein the fortunes of the man  
Lay slumbering in prophetic light,  
In characters a child might scan?  
So bright, and gone forth utterly!  
O stern word — Nevermore!

The stars of those two gentle eyes  
Will shine no more on earth;  
Quenched are the hopes that had their  
birth,  
As we watched them slowly rise,  
Stars of a mother's fate;  
And she would read them o'er and o'er,  
Pondering, as she sate,  
Over their dear astrology,  
Which she had conned and conned before,  
Deeming she needs must read aright  
What was writ so passing bright.  
And yet, alas! she knew not why,  
Her voice would falter in its song,  
And tears would slide from out her eye,  
Silent, as they were doing wrong.  
O stern word — Nevermore!

The tongue that scarce had learned to  
claim  
An entrance to a mother's heart  
By that dear talisman, a mother's name,  
Sleeps all forgetful of its art!  
I loved to see the infant soul  
(How mighty in the weakness  
Of its untutored meekness!)  
Peep timidly from out its nest,  
His lips, the while,  
Fluttering with half-fledged words,  
Or hushing to a smile  
That more than words expressed,

When his glad mother on him stole  
And snatched him to her breast!  
O, thoughts were brooding in those eyes,  
That would have soared like strong-  
winged birds  
Far, far into the skies,  
Gladding the earth with song,  
And gushing harmonies,  
Had he but tarried with us long!  
O stern word — Nevermore!

How peacefully they rest,  
Crossfolded there  
Upon his little breast,  
Those small, white hands that ne'er were  
still before,  
But ever sported with his mother's hair,  
Or the plain cross that on her breast she  
wore!

Her heart no more will beat  
To feel the touch of that soft palm,  
That ever seemed a new surprise  
Sending glad thoughts up to her eyes  
To bless him with their holy calm, —  
Sweet thoughts! they made her eyes as  
sweet.

How quiet are the hands  
That wove those pleasant bands!  
But that they do not rise and sink  
With his calm breathing, I should think  
That he were dropped asleep.  
Alas! too deep, too deep  
Is this his slumber!  
Time scarce can number  
The years ere he shall wake again.  
O, may we see his eyelids open then!  
O stern word — Nevermore!

As the airy gossamere,  
Floating in the sunlight clear,  
Where'er it toucheth clingeth tightly,  
Round glossy leaf or stump unsightly,  
So from his spirit wandered out  
Tendrils spreading all about,

Knitting all things to its thrall  
 With a perfect love of all :  
 O stern word — Nevermore !

He did but float a little way  
 Adown the stream of time,  
 With dreamy eyes watching the ripples  
 play,  
 Or hearkening their fairy chime ;  
 His slender sail  
 Ne'er felt the gale ;  
 He did but float a little way,  
 And, putting to the shore  
 While yet 't was early day,  
 Went calmly on his way,  
 To dwell with us no more !  
 No jarring did he feel,  
 No grating on his shallop's keel ;  
 A strip of silver sand  
 Mingled the waters with the land  
 Where he was seen no more :  
 O stern word — Nevermore !

Full short his journey was ; no dust  
 Of earth unto his sandals gave ;  
 The weary weight that old men must,  
 He bore not to the grave.  
 He seemed a cherub who had lost his  
 way  
 And wandered hither, so his stay  
 With us was short, and 't was most meet  
 That he should be no delver in earth's  
 clod,  
 Nor need to pause and cleanse his feet  
 To stand before his God :  
 O blest word — Evermore !

#### THE SIRENS.

THE sea is lonely, the sea is dreary,  
 The sea is restless and uneasy ;  
 Thou seekest quiet, thou art weary,  
 Wandering thou knowest not whither ;—  
 Our little isle is green and breezy,  
 Come and rest thee ! O come hither,  
 Come to this peaceful home of ours,  
 Where evermore  
 The low west-wind creeps panting up  
 the shore  
 To be at rest among the flowers ;  
 Full of rest, the green moss lifts,  
 As the dark waves of the sea  
 Draw in and out of rocky rifts,  
 Calling solemnly to thee  
 With voices deep and hollow, —

“To the shore  
 Follow ! O, follow !  
 To be at rest forevermore !  
 Forevermore !”

Look how the gray old Ocean  
 From the depth of his heart rejoices,  
 Heaving with a gentle motion,  
 When he hears our restful voices ;  
 List how he sings in an undertone,  
 Chiming with our melody ;  
 And all sweet sounds of earth and air  
 Melt into one low voice alone,  
 That murmurs over the weary sea,  
 And seems to sing from everywhere, —  
 “Here mayst thou harbor peacefully,  
 Here mayst thou rest from the aching  
 oar ;

Turn thy curved prow ashore,  
 And in our green isle rest forevermore !  
 Forevermore !”  
 And Echo half wakes in the wooded hill,  
 And, to her heart so calm and deep,  
 Murmurs over in her sleep,  
 Doubtfully pausing and murmuring still,  
 “Evermore !”

Thus, on Life's weary sea,  
 Heareth the marinere  
 Voices sweet, from far and near,  
 Ever singing low and clear,  
 Ever singing longingly.

Is it not better here to be,  
 Than to be toiling late and soon ?  
 In the dreary night to see  
 Nothing but the blood-red moon  
 Go up and down into the sea ;  
 Or, in the loneliness of day,  
 To see the still seals only  
 Solemnly lift their faces gray,  
 Making it yet more lonely ?  
 Is it not better than to hear  
 Only the sliding of the wave  
 Beneath the plank, and feel so near  
 A cold and lonely grave,  
 A restless grave, where thou shalt lie  
 Even in death unquietly ?  
 Look down beneath thy wave-worn bark,  
 Lean over the side and see  
 The leaden eye of the sidelong shark  
 Upturned patiently,  
 Ever waiting there for thee :  
 Look down and see those shapeless forms,  
 Which ever keep their dreamless sleep  
 Far down within the gloomy deep,  
 And only stir themselves in storms,  
 Rising like islands from beneath,

And snorting through the angry spray,  
 As the frail vessel perisheth  
 In the whirls of their unwieldy play ;  
 Look down ! Look down !  
 Upon the seaweed, slimy and dark,  
 That waves its arms so lank and brown,  
 Beckoning for thee !  
 Look down beneath thy wave-worn bark  
 Into the cold depth of the sea !  
 Look down ! Look down !  
 Thus, on Life's lonely sea,  
 Hearerh the marinere  
 Voices sad, from far and near,  
 Ever singing full of fear,  
 Ever singing drearfully.

Here all is pleasant as a dream ;  
 The wind scarce shaketh down the dew,  
 The green grass floweth like a stream  
 Into the ocean's blue ;  
 Listen ! O, listen !  
 Here is a gush of many streams,  
 A song of many birds,  
 And every wish and longing seems  
 Lulled to a numbered flow of words, —  
 Listen ! O, listen !  
 Here ever hum the golden bees  
 Underneath full-blossomed trees,  
 At once with glowing fruit and flowers  
 crowned ;—  
 So smooth the sand, the yellow sand,  
 That thy keel will not grate as it touches  
 the land ;  
 All around with a slumberous sound,  
 The singing waves slide up the strand,  
 And there, where the smooth, wet pebbles be,  
 The waters gurgle longingly,  
 As if they fain would seek the shore,  
 To be at rest from the ceaseless roar,  
 To be at rest forevermore, —  
 Forevermore.  
 Thus, on Life's gloomy sea,  
 Hearerh the marinere  
 Voices sweet, from far and near,  
 Ever singing in his ear,  
 "Here is rest and peace for thee !"

## IRENÉ.

HERS is a spirit deep, and crystal-clear ;  
 Calmly beneath her earnest face it lies,  
 Free without boldness, meek without a  
 fear,  
 Quicker to look than speak its sym-  
 pathies ;

Far down into her large and patient eyes  
 I gaze, deep-drinking of the infinite,  
 As, in the mid-watch of a clear, still night,  
 I look into the fathomless blue skies.

So circled lives she with Love's holy  
 light,  
 That from the shade of self she walketh  
 free ;  
 The garden of her soul still keepeth she  
 An Eden where the snake did never enter ;  
 She hath a natural, wise sincerity,  
 A simple truthfulness, and these have lent  
 her  
 A dignity as moveless as the centre ;  
 So that no influence of our earth can stir  
 Her steadfast courage, nor can take away  
 The holy peacefulness, which night and  
 day,  
 Unto her queenly soul doth minister.

Most gentle is she ; her large charity  
 (An all unwitting, childlike gift in her)  
 Not freer is to give than meek to bear ;  
 And, though herself not unacquaint with  
 care,  
 Hath in her heart wide room for all that  
 be, —  
 Her heart that hath no secrets of its own,  
 But open is as eglantine full blown.  
 Cloudless forever is her brow serene,  
 Speaking calm hope and trust within her,  
 whence  
 Welleth a noiseless spring of patience,  
 That keepeth all her life so fresh, so green  
 And full of holiness, that every look,  
 The greatness of her woman's soul reveal-  
 ing,  
 Unto me bringeth blessing, and a feeling  
 As when I read in God's own holy book.

A graciousness in giving that doth make  
 The small'st gift greatest, and a sense  
 most meek  
 Of worthiness, that doth not fear to take  
 From others, but which always fears to  
 speak  
 Its thanks in utterance, for the giver's  
 sake ; —  
 The deep religion of a thankful heart,  
 Which rests instinctively in Heaven's  
 clear law  
 With a full peace, that never can depart  
 From its own steadfastness ;— a holy awe  
 For holy things, — not those which men  
 call holy,  
 But such as are revealed to the eyes



Of a true woman's soul bent down and  
lowly  
Before the face of daily mysteries ;—  
A love that blossoms soon, but ripens  
slowly  
To the full goldenness of fruitful prime,  
Enduring with a firmness that defies  
All shallow tricks of circumstance and  
time,  
By a sure insight knowing where to cling,  
And where it clingeth never withering ;—  
These are Irené's dowry, which no fate  
Can shake from their serene, deep-built  
state.

In-seeing sympathy is hers, which chas-  
teneth  
No less than loveth, scorning to be bound  
With fear of blame, and yet which ever  
hasteneth  
To pour the balm of kind looks on the  
wound,  
If they be wounds which such sweet teach-  
ing makes,  
Giving itself a pang for others' sakes ;  
No want of faith, that chills with side-  
long eye,  
Hath she ; no jealousy, no Levite pride  
That passeth by upon the other side ;  
For in her soul there never dwelt a lie.  
Right from the hand of God her spirit  
came  
Unstained, and she hath ne'er forgotten  
whence  
It came, nor wandered far from thence,  
But laboreth to keep her still the same,  
Near to her place of birth, that she may  
not  
Soil her white raiment with an earthly  
spot.

Yet sets she not her soul so steadily  
Above, that she forgets her ties to earth,  
But her whole thought would almost seem  
to be  
How to make glad one lowly human  
hearth ;  
For with a gentle courage she doth strive  
In thought and word and feeling so to  
live  
As to make earth next heaven ; and her  
heart  
Herein doth show its most exceeding  
worth,  
That, bearing in our frailty her just part,  
She hath not shrunk from evils of this  
life,

But hath gone calmly forth into the  
strife,  
And all its sins and sorrows hath with-  
stood  
With lofty strength of patient woman-  
hood :  
For this I love her great soul more than  
all,  
That, being bound, like us, with earthly  
thrall,  
She walks so bright and heaven-like  
therein, —  
Too wise, too meek, too womanly, to sin.

Like a lone star through riven storm-  
clouds seen  
By sailors, tempest-tost upon the sea,  
Telling of rest and peaceful heavens nigh,  
Unto my soul her star-like soul hath  
been,  
Her sight as full of hope and calm to  
me ;—  
For she unto herself hath builded high  
A home serene, wherein to lay her head,  
Earth's noblest thing, a Woman per-  
fected.

#### SERENADE.

FROM the close-shut windows gleams no  
spark,  
The night is chilly, the night is dark,  
The poplars shiver, the pine-trees moan,  
My hair by the autumn breeze is blown,  
Under thy window I sing alone,  
Alone, alone, ah woe ! alone !

The darkness is pressing coldly around,  
The windows shake with a lonely sound,  
The stars are hid and the night is drear,  
The heart of silence throbs in thine ear,  
In thy chamber thou sittest alone,  
Alone, alone, ah woe ! alone !

The world is happy, the world is wide,  
Kind hearts are beating on every side ;  
Ah, why should we lie so coldly curled  
Alone in the shell of this great world ?  
Why should we any more be alone ?  
Alone, alone, ah woe ! alone !

O, 't is a bitter and dreary word,  
The saddest by man's ear ever heard !  
We each are young, we each have a heart  
Why stand we ever coldly apart ?  
Must we forever, then, be alone ?  
Alone, alone, ah woe ! alone !



## WITH A PRESSED FLOWER.

THIS little blossom from afar  
Hath come from other lands to thine ;  
For, once, its white and drooping star  
Could see its shadow in the Rhine.

Perchance some fair-haired German maid  
Hath plucked one from the selfsame  
stalk,  
And numbered over, half afraid,  
Its petals in her evening walk.

"He loves me, loves me not," she cries ;  
"He loves me more than earth or  
heaven !"  
And then glad tears have filled her eyes  
To find the number was uneven.

And thou must count its petals well,  
Because it is a gift from me ;  
And the last one of all shall tell  
Something I've often told to thee.

But here at home, where we were born,  
Thou wilt find blossoms just as true,  
Down-bending every summer morn,  
With freshness of New-England dew.

For Nature, ever kind to love,  
Hath granted them the same sweet  
tongue,  
Whether with German skies above,  
Or here our granite rocks among.

## THE BEGGAR.

A BEGGAR through the world am I, —  
From place to place I wander by.  
Fill up my pilgrim's scrip for me,  
For Christ's sweet sake and charity !

A little of thy steadfastness,  
Rounded with leafy gracefulness,  
Old oak, give me, —  
That the world's blasts may round me  
blow,  
And I yield gently to and fro,  
While my stout-hearted trunk below  
And firm-set roots unshaken be.

Some of thy stern, unyielding might,  
Enduring still through day and night  
Rude tempest-shock and withering  
blight, —  
That I may keep at bay

The changeful April sky of chance  
And the strong tide of circumstance, —  
Give me, old granite gray,

Some of thy pensiveness serene,  
Some of thy never-dying green,  
Put in this scrip of mine, —  
That griefs may fall like snow-flakes  
light,

And deck me in a robe of white,  
Ready to be an angel bright, —  
O sweetly mournful pine.

A little of thy merriment,  
Of thy sparkling, light content,  
Give me, my cheerful brook,  
That I may still be full of glee  
And gladness, where'er I be,  
Though fickle fate hath prisoned me  
In some neglected nook.

Ye have been very kind and good  
To me, since I've been in the wood ;  
Ye have gone nigh to fill my heart ;  
But good-bye, kind friends, every one,  
I've far to go ere set of sun ;  
Of all good things I would have part,  
The day was high ere I could start,  
And so my journey's scarce begun.

Heaven help me ! how could I forget  
To beg of thee, dear violet !  
Some of thy modesty,  
That blossoms here as well, unseen,  
As if before the world thou 'dst been,  
Oh, give, to strengthen me.

## MY LOVE.

## I.

NOT as all other women are  
Is she that to my soul is dear ;  
Her glorious fancies come from far,  
Beneath the silver evening-star,  
And yet her heart is ever near.

## II.

Great feelings hath she of her own,  
Which lesser souls may never know ;  
God giveth them to her alone,  
And sweet they are as any tone  
Wherewith the wind may choose to blow.

## III.

Yet in herself she dwelleth not,  
Although no home were half so fair ;

No simplest duty is forgot,  
Life hath no dim and lowly spot  
That doth not in her sunshine share.

## IV.

She doeth little kindnesses,  
Which most leave undone, or despise :  
For naught that sets one heart at ease,  
And giveth happiness or peace,  
Is low-esteem'd in her eyes.

## V.

She hath no scorn of common things,  
And, though she seem of other birth,  
Round us her heart entwines and clings,  
And patiently she folds her wings  
To tread the humble paths of earth.

## VI.

Blessing she is : God made her so,  
And deeds of week-day holiness  
Fall from her noiseless as the snow,  
Nor hath she ever chanced to know  
That aught were easier than to bless.

## VII.

She is most fair, and thereunto  
Her life doth rightly harmonize ;  
Feeling or thought that was not true  
Ne'er made less beautiful the blue  
Unclouded heaven of her eyes.

## VIII.

She is a woman : one in whom  
The spring-time of her childish years  
Hath never lost its fresh perfume,  
Though knowing well that life hath room  
For many blights and many tears.

## IX.

I love her with a love as still  
As a broad river's peaceful might,  
Which, by high tower and lowly mill,  
Seem following its own wayward will,  
And yet doth ever flow aright.

## X.

And, on its full, deep breast serene,  
Like quiet isles my duties lie ;  
It flows around them and between,  
And makes them fresh and fair and green,  
Sweet homes wherein to live and die.

## SUMMER STORM.

UNTREMULOUS in the river clear,  
Toward the sky's image, hangs the im-  
aged bridge ;

So still the air that I can hear  
The slender clarion of the unseen midge ;  
Out of the stillness, with a gathering  
creep,

Like rising wind in leaves, which now  
decreases,

Now lulls, now swells, and all the while  
increases,

The huddling trample of a drove of  
sheep

Tilts the loose planks, and then as grad-  
ually ceases

In dust on the other side ; life's em-  
blem deep,

A confused noise between two silences,  
Finding at last in dust precarious peace.

On the wide marsh the purple-blossomed  
grasses

Soak up the sunshine ; sleeps the  
brimming tide,

Save when the wedge-shaped wake in  
silence passes

Of some slow water-rat, whose sinuous  
glide

Wavers the sedge's emerald shade from  
side to side ;

But up the west, like a rock-shivered  
surge,

Climbs a great cloud edged with sun-  
whitened spray ;

Huge whirls of foam boil toppling o'er  
its verge,

And falling still it seems, and yet it  
climbs alway.

Suddenly all the sky is hid  
As with the shutting of a lid,

One by one great drops are falling  
Doubtful and slow,

Down the pane they are crookedly  
crawling,

And the wind breathes low ;  
Slowly the circles widen on the  
river,

Widen and mingle, one and all ;  
Here and there the slenderer flowers  
shiver,

Struck by an icy rain-flop's fall.

Now on the hills I hear the thunder  
mutter,

The wind is gathering in the west ;

The upturned leaves first whiten and flutter,

Then droop to a fitful rest ;

Up from the stream with sluggish flap  
Struggles the gull and floats away ;  
Nearer and nearer rolls the thunder-clap, —

We shall not see the sun go down to-day :

Now leaps the wind on the sleepy marsh,  
And tramples the grass with terrified feet,

The startled river turns leaden and harsh.  
You can hear the quick heart of the tempest beat.

Look ! look ! that livid flash !  
And instantly follows the rattling thunder,

As if some cloud-crag, split asunder,  
Fell, splintering with a ruinous crash,

On the Earth, which crouches in silence under ;

And now a solid gray wall of rain  
Shuts off the landscape, mile by mile ;  
For a breath's space I see the blue wood again,

And ere the next heart-beat, the wind-hurled pile,

That seemed but now a league aloof,  
Bursts crackling o'er the sun-parched roof ;

Against the windows the storm comes dashing,

Through tattered foliage the hail tears crashing,

The blue lightning flashes,

The rapid hail clashes,

The white waves are tumbling,

And, in one baffled roar,

Like the toothless sea mumbling

A rock-bristled shore,

The thunder is rumbling

And crashing and crumbling, —

Will silence return nevermore !

Hush ! Still as death,

The tempest holds his breath

As from a sudden will ;

The rain stops short, but from the eaves

You see it drop, and hear it from the leaves,

All is so bodingly still ;

Again, now, now, again

Plashes the rain in heavy gout,

The crinkled lightning  
Seems ever brightening,

And loud and long

Again the thunder shouts

His battle-song, —

One quivering flash,

One wildering crash,

Followed by silence dead and dull,

As if the cloud, let go,

Leapt bodily below

To whelm the earth in one mad overthrow,

And then a total lull.

Gone, gone, so soon !

No more my half-dazed fancy  
there,

Can shape a giant in the air,

No more I see his streaming hair,

The writhing portent of his form ;—

The pale and quiet moon

Makes her calm forehead bare,

And the last fragments of the storm,  
Like shattered rigging from a fight at sea,  
Silent and few, are drifting over me.

## LOVE.

TRUE Love is but a humble, low-born thing,

And hath its food served up in earthen ware ;

It is a thing to walk with, hand in hand,  
Through the every-dayness of this work-day world,

Baring its tender feet to every flint,  
Yet letting not one heart-beat go astray  
From Beauty's law of plainness and content ;

A simple, fireside thing, whose quiet smile

Can warm earth's poorest hovel to a home ;

Which, when our autumn cometh, as it must,

And life in the chill wind shivers bare and leafless,

Shall still be blest with Indian-summer youth

In bleak November, and, with thankful heart,

Smile on its ample stores of garnered fruit,

As full of sunshine to our aged eyes

As when it nursed the blossoms of our spring.



Such is true Love, which steals into the heart

With feet as silent as the lightsome dawn  
That kisses smooth the rough brows of  
the dark,

And hath its will through blissful gentleness,

Not like a rocket, which, with passionate glare,

Whirs suddenly up, then bursts, and leaves the night

Painfully quivering on the dazed eyes ;  
A love that gives and takes, that seeth faults,

Not with flaw-seeking eyes like needle points,

But loving-kindly ever looks them down  
With the o'ercoming faith that still forgives ;

A love that shall be new and fresh each hour,

As is the sunset's golden mystery,  
Or the sweet coming of the evening-star,  
Alike, and yet most unlike, every day,  
And seeming ever best and fairest now ;  
A love that doth not kneel for what it seeks,

But faces Truth and Beauty as their peer,

Showing its worthiness of noble thoughts  
By a clear sense of inward nobleness ;

A love that in its object findeth not  
All grace and beauty, and enough to sate  
Its thirst of blessing, but, in all of good  
Found there, sees but the Heaven-implanted types

Of good and beauty in the soul of man,  
And traces, in the simplest heart that beats,

A family-likeness to its chosen one,  
That claims of it the rights of brotherhood.

For love is blind but with the fleshly eye,

That so its inner sight may be more clear ;  
And outward shows of beauty only so  
Are needful at the first, as is a hand  
To guide and to uphold an infant's steps :  
Fine natures need them not : their earnest look

Pierces the body's mask of thin disguise,  
And beauty ever is to them revealed,  
Behind the unshapeliest, meanest lump  
of clay,

With arms outstretched and eager face ablaze,

Yearning to be but understood and loved.

#### TO PERDITA, SINGING.

THY voice is like a fountain,  
Leaping up in clear moonshine ;  
Silver, silver, ever mounting,

Ever sinking,  
Without thinking,

To that brimful heart of thine.  
Every sad and happy feeling,  
Thou hast had in bygone years,  
Through thy lips comes stealing, steal-  
ing,

Clear and low ;

All thy smiles and all thy tears

In thy voice awaken,

And sweetness, wave of joy and woe,

From their teaching it hath taken :  
Feeling and music move together,  
Like a swan and shadow ever  
Floating on a sky-blue river  
In a day of cloudless weather.

It hath caught a touch of sadness,

Yet it is not sad ;

It hath tones of clearest gladness,

Yet it is not glad ;

A dim, sweet twilight voice it is  
Where to-day's accustomed blue  
Is over-grayed with memories,  
With starry feelings quivered through.

Thy voice is like a fountain  
Leaping up in sunshine bright,  
And I never weary counting  
Its clear droppings, lone and single,  
Or when in one full gush they mingle,  
Shooting in melodious light.

Thine is music such as yields  
Feelings of old brooks and fields,  
And, around this pent-up room,  
Sheds a woodland, free perfume ;

O, thus forever sing to me !

O, thus forever !

The green, bright grass of childhood  
bring to me,

Flowing like an emerald river,  
And the bright blue skies above !

O, sing them back, as fresh as ever,  
Into the bosom of my love, —

The sunshine and the merriment,  
The unsought, evergreen content,

Of that never cold time,

The joy, that, like a clear breeze, went  
Through and through the old time !

Peace sits within thine eyes,  
With white hands crossed in joyful rest,



While, through thy lips and face, arise  
The melodies from out thy breast ;

She sits and sings,  
With folded wings  
And white arms crost,

“Weep not for bygone things,  
They are not lost :

The beauty which the summer time  
O'er thine opening spirit shed,  
The forest oracles sublime  
That filled thy soul with joyous dread,  
The scent of every smallest flower  
That made thy heart sweet for an  
hour,

Yea, every holy influence,  
Flowing to thee, thou knewest not  
whence,

In thine eyes to-day is seen,  
Fresh as it hath ever been ;  
Promptings of Nature, beckonings  
sweet,

Whatever led thy childish feet,  
Still will linger unawares  
The guiders of thy silver hairs ;  
Every look and every word  
Which thou givest forth to-day,  
Tell of the singing of the bird  
Whose music stilled thy boyish play.”

Thy voice is like a fountain,  
Twinkling up in sharp starlight,  
When the moon behind the mountain  
Dims the low East with faintest white,  
Ever darkling,  
Ever sparkling,

We know not if 't is dark or bright ;  
But, when the great moon hath rolled  
round,

And, sudden-slow, its solemn power  
Grows from behind its black, clear-edg'd  
bound,

No spot of dark the fountain keepeth,  
But, swift as opening eyelids, leapeth  
Into a waving silver flower.

#### THE MOON.

My soul was like the sea,  
Before the moon was made,  
Moaning in vague immensity,  
Of its own strength afraid,  
Unrestful and unstead.

Through every rift it foamed in vain,  
About its earthly prison,  
Seeking some unknown thing in pain,  
And sinking restless back again,

For yet no moon had risen :  
Its only voice a vast dumb moan,  
Of utterless anguish speaking,  
It lay unhopelessly alone,  
And lived but in an aimless seeking.

So was my soul ; but when 't was full  
Of unrest to o'erloading,  
A voice of something beautiful  
Whispered a dim foreboding,  
And yet so soft, so sweet, so low,  
It had not more of joy than woe ;  
And, as the sea doth oft lie still,  
Making its waters meet,  
As if by an unconscious will,  
For the moon's silver feet,  
So lay my soul within mine eyes  
When thou, its guardian moon, didst rise.

And now, howe'er its waves above  
May toss and seem unceasing,  
One strong, eternal law of Love,  
With guidance sure and peaceful,  
As calm and natural as breath,  
Moves its great deeps through life and  
death.

#### REMEMBERED MUSIC.

##### A FRAGMENT.

THICK-RUSHING, like an ocean vast  
Of bisons the far prairie shaking,  
The notes crowd heavily and fast  
As surfs, one plunging while the last  
Draws seaward from its foamy breaking.

Or in low murmurs they began,  
Rising and rising momentarily,  
As o'er a harp Æolian  
A fitful breeze, until they ran  
Up to a sudden ecstasy.

And then, like minute-drops of rain  
Ringing in water silverly,  
They lingering dropped and dropped  
again,  
Till it was almost like a pain  
To listen when the next would be.

#### SONG.

##### TO M. L.

A LILY thou wast when I saw thee first,  
A lily-bud not opened quite,  
That hourly grew more pure and  
white,

By morning, and noontide, and evening  
nursed :

In all of nature thou hadst thy share ;  
Thou wast waited on  
By the wind and sun ;  
Therain and the dew for thee took care ;  
It seemed thou never couldst be more  
fair.

A lily thou wast when I saw thee first,  
A lily-bud ; but O, how strange,  
How full of wonder was the change,  
When, ripe with all sweetness, thy full  
bloom burst !  
How did the tears to my glad eyes start,  
When the woman-flower  
Reached its blossoming hour,  
And I saw the warm deeps of thy  
golden heart !

Glad death may pluck thee, but never  
before  
The gold dust of thy bloom divine  
Hath dropped from thy heart into  
mine,

To quicken its faint germs of heavenly  
lore ;  
For no breeze comes nigh thee but car-  
ries away  
Some impulses bright  
Of fragrance and light,  
Which fall upon souls that are lone  
and astray,  
To plant fruitful hopes of the flower of  
day.

#### ALLEGRA.

I WOULD more natures were like thine,  
That never casts a glance before,  
Thou Hebe, who thy heart's bright wine  
So lavishly to all dost pour,  
That we who drink forget to pine,  
And can but dream of bliss in store.

Thou canst not see a shade in life ;  
With sunward instinct thou dost rise,  
And, leaving clouds below at strife,  
Gazest undazzled at the skies,  
With all their blazing splendors rife,  
A songful lark with eagle's eyes.

Thou wast some foundling whom the  
Hours  
Nursed, laughing, with the milk of  
Mirth ;  
Some influence more gay than ours  
Hath ruled thy nature from its birth,

As if thy natal stars were flowers  
That shook their seeds round thee on  
earth.

And thou, to lull thine infant rest,  
Wast cradled like an Indian child ;  
All pleasant winds from south and west  
With lullabies thine ears beguiled,  
Rocking thee in thine oriole's nest,  
Till Nature looked at thee and smiled.

Thine every fancy seems to borrow  
A sunlight from thy childish years,  
Making a golden cloud of sorrow,  
A hope-lit rainbow out of tears, —  
Thy heart is certain of to-morrow,  
Though 'yond to-day it never peers.

I would more natures were like thine,  
So innocently wild and free,  
Whose sad thoughts, even, leap and shine,  
Like sunny wavelets in the sea,  
Making us mindless of the brine,  
In gazing on the brilliancy.

#### THE FOUNTAIN.

INTO the sunshine,  
Full of the light,  
Leaping and flashing  
From morn till night ;

Into the moonlight,  
Whiter than snow,  
Waving so flower-like  
When the winds blow ;

Into the starlight  
Rushing in spray,  
Happy at midnight,  
Happy by day ;

Ever in motion,  
Blithesome and cheery,  
Still climbing heavenward,  
Never weary ;

Glad of all weathers,  
Still seeming best,  
Upward or downward,  
Motion thy rest ;

Full of a nature  
Nothing can tame,  
Changed every moment,  
Ever the same ;

Ceaseless aspiring,  
Ceaseless content,  
Darkness or sunshine  
Thy element;

Glorious fountain,  
Let my heart be  
Fresh, changeful, constant,  
Upward, like thee!

## ODE.

## I.

In the old days of awe and keen-eyed  
wonder,  
The Poet's song with blood-warm truth  
was rife;  
He saw the mysteries which circle under  
The outward shell and skin of daily life.  
Nothing to him were fleeting time and  
fashion,  
His soul was led by the eternal law;  
There was in him no hope of fame, no  
passion,  
But with calm, godlike eyes he only  
saw.  
He did not sigh o'er heroes dead and  
buried,  
Chief-mourner at the Golden Age's  
hearse,  
Nor deem that souls whom Charon grim  
had ferried  
Alone were fitting themes of epic verse:  
He could believe the promise of to-  
morrow,  
And feel the wondrous meaning of to-  
day;  
He had a deeper faith in holy sorrow  
Than the world's seeming loss could  
take away.  
To know the heart of all things was his  
duty,  
All things did sing to him to make him  
wise,  
And, with a sorrowful and conquering  
beauty,  
The soul of all looked grandly from his  
eyes.  
He gazed on all within him and without  
him,  
He watched the flowing of Time's steady  
tide,  
And shapes of glory floated all about  
him  
And whispered to him, and he prophe-  
sied.

Than all men he more fearless was and  
freer,  
And all his brethren cried with one  
accord, —  
"Behold the holy man! Behold the  
Seer!  
Him who hath spoken with the unseen  
Lord!"  
He to his heart with large embrace had  
taken  
The universal sorrow of mankind,  
And, from that root, a shelter never  
shaken,  
The tree of wisdom grew with sturdy  
rind.  
He could interpret well the wondrous  
voices  
Which to the calm and silent spirit  
come;  
He knew that the One Soul no more  
rejoices  
In the star's anthem than the insect's  
hum.  
He in his heart was ever meek and  
humble,  
And yet with kingly pomp his num-  
bers ran,  
As he foresaw how all things false should  
crumble  
Before the free, uplifted soul of man:  
And, when he was made full to overflow-  
ing  
With all the loveliness of heaven and  
earth,  
Out rushed his song, like molten iron  
glowing,  
To show God sitting by the humblest  
hearth.  
With calmest courage he was ever ready  
To teach that action was the truth of  
thought,  
And, with strong arm and purpose firm  
and steady,  
An anchor for the drifting world he  
wrought.  
So did he make the meanest man par-  
taker  
Of all his brother-gods unto him  
gave;  
All souls did reverence him and name  
him Maker,  
And when he died heaped temples on  
his grave.  
And still his deathless words of light are  
swimming  
Serene throughout the great deep in-  
finite



Of human soul, unwaning and undim-  
ming,  
To cheer and guide the mariner at  
night.

## II.

But now the Poet is an empty rhym-  
er  
Who lies with idle elbow on the grass,  
And fits his singing, like a cunning  
timer,  
To all men's prides and fancies as they  
pass.  
Not his the song, which, in its metre  
holy,  
Chimes with the music of the eternal  
stars,  
Humbling the tyrant, lifting up the  
lowly,  
And sending sun through the soul's  
prison-bars.  
Maker no more, — O no! unmaker  
rather,  
For he unmakes who doth not all put  
forth  
The power given freely by our loving  
Father  
To show the body's dross, the spirit's  
worth.  
Awake! great spirit of the ages olden!  
Shiver the mists that hide thy starry  
lyre,  
And let man's soul be yet again beholden  
To thee for wings to soar to her desire.  
O, prophesy no more to-morrow's splen-  
dor,  
Be no more shamefaced to speak out  
for Truth,  
Lay on her altar all the gushings tender,  
The hope, the fire, the loving faith of  
youth!  
O, prophesy no more the Maker's com-  
ing,  
Say not his onward footsteps thou  
canst hear  
In the dim void, like to the awful hum-  
ming  
Of the great wings of some new-light-  
ed sphere!  
O, prophesy no more, but be the Poet!  
This longing was but granted unto  
thee  
That, when all beauty thou shouldst feel  
and know it,  
That beauty in its highest thou couldst  
be.  
O thou who moanest tost with sealike  
longings,

Who dimly hearest voices call on thee,  
Whose soul is overfilled with mighty  
throughings  
Of love, and fear, and glorious agony,  
Thou of the toil-strung hands and iron  
sinews  
And soul by Mother Earth with free-  
dom fed,  
In whom the hero-spirit yet continues,  
The old free nature is not chained or  
dead,  
Arouse! let thy soul break in music  
thunder,  
Let loose the ocean that is in thee  
pent,  
Pour forth thy hope, thy fear, thy love,  
thy wonder,  
And tell the age what all its signs  
have meant.  
Where'er thy wildered crowd of brethren  
jostles,  
Where'er there lingers but a shadow of  
wrong,  
There still is need of martyrs and apos-  
tles,  
There still are texts for never-dying  
song:  
From age to age man's still aspiring  
spirit  
Finds wider scope and sees with clearer  
eyes,  
And thou in larger measure dost inherit  
What made thy great forerunners free  
and wise.  
Sit thou enthroned where the Poet's  
mountain  
Above the thunder lifts its silent  
peak,  
And roll thy songs down like a gathering  
fountain,  
They all may drink and find the rest  
they seek.  
Sing! there shall silence grow in earth  
and heaven,  
A silence of deep awe and wondering;  
For, listening gladly, bend the angels,  
even,  
To hear a mortal like an angel sing.

## III.

Among the toil-worn poor my soul is  
seeking  
For who shall bring the Maker's name  
to light,  
To be the voice of that almighty speak-  
ing



Which every age demands to do it  
right.  
Proprieties our silken bards environ;  
He who would be the tongue of this  
wide land  
Must string his harp with chords of  
sturdy iron  
And strike it with a toil-imbrownèd  
hand;  
One who hath dwelt with Nature well  
attended,  
Who hath learnt wisdom from her  
mystic books,  
Whose soul with all her countless lives  
hath blended,  
So that all beauty awes us in his looks;  
Who not with body's waste his soul hath  
pampered,  
Who as the clear northwestern wind is  
free,  
Who walks with Form's observances un-  
hampered,  
And follows the One Will obediently;  
Whose eyes, like windows on a breezy  
summit,  
Control a lovely prospect every way;  
Who doth not sound God's sea with  
earthly plummet,  
And find a bottom still of worthless  
clay;  
Who heeds not how the lower gusts are  
working,  
Knowing that one sure wind blows on  
above,  
And sees, beneath the foulest faces lurk-  
ing,  
One God-built shrine of reverence and  
love;  
Who sees all stars that wheel their shin-  
ing marches  
Around the centre fixed of Destiny,  
Where the encircling soul serene o'er-  
arches  
The moving globe of being like a sky;  
Who feels that God and Heaven's great  
deeps are nearer  
Him to whose heart his fellow-man is  
nigh,  
Who doth not hold his soul's own free-  
dom dearer  
Than that of all his brethren, low or  
high;  
Who to the Right can feel himself the  
truer  
For being gently patient with the  
wrong,  
Who sees a brother in the evil-doer,

And finds in Love the heart's-blood of  
his song;—  
This, this is he for whom the world is  
waiting  
To sing the beatings of its mighty  
heart,  
Too long hath it been patient with the  
grating  
Of scrannel-pipes, and heard it mis-  
named Art.  
To him the smiling soul of man shall  
listen,  
Laying awhile its crown of thorns  
aside,  
And once again in every eye shall glisten  
The glory of a nature satisfied.  
His verse shall have a great command-  
ing motion,  
Heaving and swelling with a melody  
Learnt of the sky, the river, and the  
ocean,  
And all the pure, majestic things that  
be.  
Awake, then, thou! we pine for thy  
great presence  
To make us feel the soul once more  
sublime,  
We are of far too infinite an essence  
To rest contented with the lies of  
Time.  
Speak out! and lo! a hush of deepest  
wonder  
Shall sink o'er all this many-voicèd  
scene,  
As when a sudden burst of rattling  
thunder  
Shatters the blueness of a sky serene.

## THE FATHERLAND.

WHERE is the true man's fatherland?  
Is it where he by chance is born?  
Doth not the yearning spirit scorn  
In such scant borders to be spanned?  
O yes! his fatherland must be  
As the blue heaven wide and free!

Is it alone where freedom is,  
Where God is God and man is man?  
Doth he not claim a broader span  
For the soul's love of home than this?  
O yes! his fatherland must be  
As the blue heaven wide and free!

Where'er a human heart doth wear  
Joy's myrtle-wreath or sorrow's gyves,

Where'er a human spirit strives  
 After a life more true and fair,  
 There is the true man's birthplace grand,  
 His is a world-wide fatherland !

Where'er a single slave doth pine,  
 Where'er one man may help another, —  
 Thank God for such a birthright,  
 brother, —  
 That spot of earth is thine and mine !  
 There is the true man's birthplace grand,  
 His is a world-wide fatherland !

#### THE FORLORN.

THE night is dark, the stinging sleet,  
 Swept by the bitter gusts of air,  
 Drives whistling down the lonely street,  
 And glazes on the pavement bare.

The street-lamps flare and struggle dim  
 Through the gray sleet-clouds as they  
 pass,  
 Or, governed by a boisterous whim,  
 Drop down and rustle on the glass.

One poor, heart-broken, outcast girl  
 Faces the east-wind's searching flaws,  
 And, as about her heart they whirl,  
 Her tattered cloak more tightly draws.

The flat brick walls look cold and bleak,  
 Her bare feet to the sidewalk freeze ;  
 Yet dares she not a shelter seek,  
 Though faint with hunger and disease.

The sharp storm cuts her forehead bare,  
 And, piercing through her garments thin,  
 Beats on her shrunken breast, and there  
 Makes colder the cold heart within.

She lingers where a ruddy glow  
 Streams outward through an open  
 shutter,  
 Adding more bitterness to woe,  
 More lonesomeness to desertion utter.

One half the cold she had not felt  
 Until she saw this gush of light  
 Spread warmly forth, and seem to melt  
 Its slow way through the deadening  
 night.

She hears a woman's voice within,  
 Singing sweet words her childhood  
 knew,

And years of misery and sin  
 Furl off, and leave her heaven blue.

Her freezing heart, like one who sinks  
 Outwearied in the drifting snow,  
 Drowns to deadly sleep and thinks  
 No longer of its hopeless woe :

Old fields, and clear blue summer days,  
 Old meadows, green with grass, and  
 trees  
 That shimmer through the trembling  
 haze  
 And whiten in the western breeze,

Old faces, all the friendly past  
 Rises within her heart again,  
 And sunshine from her childhood cast  
 Makes summer of the icy rain.

Enhaloed by a mild, warm glow,  
 From man's humanity apart,  
 She hears old footsteps wandering slow  
 Through the lone chambers of the  
 heart.

Outside the porch before the door,  
 Her cheek upon the cold, hard stone,  
 She lies, no longer foul and poor,  
 No longer dreary and alone.

Next morning something heavily  
 Against the opening door did weigh,  
 And there, from sin and sorrow free,  
 A woman on the threshold lay.

A smile upon the wan lips told  
 That she had found a calm release,  
 And that, from out the want and cold,  
 The song had borne her soul in peace.

For, whom the heart of man shuts out,  
 Sometimes the heart of God takes in,  
 And fences them all round about  
 With silence mid the world's loud din ;

And one of his great charities  
 Is Music, and it doth not scorn  
 To close the lids upon the eyes  
 Of the polluted and forlorn ;

Far was she from her childhood's home,  
 Farther in guilt had wandered thence,  
 Yet thither it had bid her come  
 To die in maiden innocence.

## MIDNIGHT.

THE moon shines white and silent  
 On the mist, which, like a tide  
 Of some enchanted ocean,  
 O'er the wide marsh doth glide,  
 Spreading its ghost-like billows  
 Silently far and wide.

A vague and starry magic  
 Makes all things mysteries,  
 And lures the earth's dumb spirit  
 Up to the longing skies, —  
 I seem to hear dim whispers,  
 And tremulous replies.

The fireflies o'er the meadow  
 In pulses come and go ;  
 The elm-trees' heavy shadow  
 Weighs on the grass below ;  
 And faintly from the distance  
 The dreaming cock doth crow.

All things look strange and mystic,  
 The very bushes swell  
 And take wild shapes and motions,  
 As if beneath a spell ;  
 They seem not the same lilacs  
 From childhood known so well.

The snow of deepest silence  
 O'er everything doth fall,  
 So beautiful and quiet,  
 And yet so like a pall,  
 As if all life were ended,  
 And rest were come to all.

O wild and wondrous midnight,  
 There is a might in thee  
 To make the charm'd body  
 Almost like spirit be,  
 And give it some faint glimpses  
 Of immortality !

## A PRAYER.

GOD ! do not let my loved one die,  
 But rather wait until the time  
 That I am grown in purity  
 Enough to enter thy pure clime,  
 Then take me, I will gladly go,  
 So that my love remain below !

O, let her stay ! She is by birth  
 What I through death must learn to  
 be ;

We need her more on our poor earth  
 Than thou canst need in heaven with  
 thee :  
 She hath her wings already, I  
 Must burst this earth-shell ere I fly.

Then, God, take me ! We shall be near,  
 More near than ever, each to each :  
 Her angel ears will find more clear  
 My heavenly than my earthly speech ;  
 And still, as I draw nigh to thee,  
 Her soul and mine shall closer be.

## THE HERITAGE.

THE rich man's son inherits lands,  
 And piles of brick, and stone, and  
 gold,  
 And he inherits soft white hands,  
 And tender flesh that fears the cold,  
 Nor dares to wear a garment old ;  
 A heritage, it seems to me,  
 One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

The rich man's son inherits cares ;  
 The bank may break, the factory burn,  
 A breath may burst his bubble shares,  
 And soft white hands could hardly  
 earn  
 A living that would serve his turn ;  
 A heritage, it seems to me,  
 One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

The rich man's son inherits wants,  
 His stomach craves for dainty fare ;  
 With sated heart, he hears the pants  
 Of toiling hinds with brown arms bare,  
 And wearies in his easy-chair ;  
 A heritage, it seems to me,  
 One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit ?  
 Stout muscles and a sinewy heart,  
 A hardy frame, a hardier spirit ;  
 King of two hands, he does his part  
 In every useful toil and art ;  
 A heritage, it seems to me,  
 A king might wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit ?  
 Wishes o'erjoyed with humble things,  
 A rank adjudged by toil-won merit,  
 Content that from employment springs,  
 A heart that in his labor sings ;  
 A heritage, it seems to me,  
 A king might wish to hold in fee.



What doth the poor man's son inherit ?

A patience learned of being poor,  
 Courage, if sorrow come, to bear it,  
 A fellow-feeling that is sure  
 To make the outcast bless his door ;  
 A heritage, it seems to me,  
 A king might wish to hold in fee.

O rich man's son ! there is a toil  
 That with all others level stands ;  
 Large charity doth never soil,  
 But only whiten, soft white hands, —  
 This is the best crop from thy lands ;  
 A heritage, it seems to me,  
 Worth being rich to hold in fee.

O poor man's son ! scorn not thy state ;  
 There is worse weariness than thine,  
 In merely being rich and great ;  
 Toil only gives the soul to shine,  
 And makes rest fragrant and be-  
 nign ;  
 A heritage, it seems to me,  
 Worth being poor to hold in fee.

Both, heirs to some six feet of sod,  
 Are equal in the earth at last ;  
 Both, children of the same dear God,  
 Prove title to your heirship vast  
 By record of a well-filled past ;  
 A heritage, it seems to me,  
 Well worth a life to hold in fee.

### THE ROSE: A BALLAD.

#### I.

In his tower sat the poet  
 Gazing on the roaring sea,  
 "Take this rose," he sighed, "and throw  
 it  
 Where there's none that loveth me.  
 On the rock the billow bursteth  
 And sinks back into the seas,  
 But in vain my spirit thirsteth  
 So to burst and be at ease.  
 Take, O sea ! the tender blossom  
 That hath lain against my breast ;  
 On thy black and angry bosom  
 It will find a surer rest.  
 Life is vain, and love is hollow,  
 Ugly death stands there behind,  
 Hate and scorn and hunger follow  
 Him that toileth for his kind."  
 Forth into the night he hurled it,  
 And with bitter smile did mark  
 How the surly tempest whirled it  
 Swift into the hungry dark.

Foam and spray drive back to leeward,  
 And the gale, with dreary moan,  
 Drifts the helpless blossom seaward,  
 Through the breakers all alone.

#### II.

Stands a maiden, on the morrow,  
 Musing by the wave-beat strand,  
 Half in hope and half in sorrow,  
 Tracing words upon the sand:  
 "Shall I ever then behold him  
 Who hath been my life so long,  
 Ever to this sick heart fold him,  
 Be the spirit of his song ?  
 Touch not, sea, the blessed letters  
 I have traced upon thy shore,  
 Spare his name whose spirit fetters  
 Mine with love forevermore !"  
 Swells the tide and overflows it,  
 But, with omen pure and meet,  
 Brings a little rose, and throws it  
 Humbly at the maiden's feet.  
 Full of bliss she takes the token,  
 And, upon her snowy breast,  
 Soothes the ruffled petals broken  
 With the ocean's fierce unrest.  
 "Love is thine, O heart ! and surely  
 Peace shall also be thine own,  
 For the heart that trusteth purely  
 Never long can pine alone."

#### III.

In his tower sits the poet,  
 Blissed new and strange to him  
 Fill his heart and overflow it  
 With a wonder sweet and dim.  
 Up the beach the ocean slideth  
 With a whisper of delight,  
 And the moon in silence glideth  
 Through the peaceful blue of night.  
 Rippling o'er the poet's shoulder  
 Flows a maiden's golden hair,  
 Maiden lips, with love grown bolder,  
 Kiss his moon-lit forehead bare.  
 "Life is joy, and love is power,  
 Death all fetters doth unbind,  
 Strength and wisdom only flower  
 When we toil for all our kind.  
 Hope is truth, — the future giveth  
 More than present takes away,  
 And the soul forever liveth  
 Nearer God from day to day."  
 Not a word the maiden uttered,  
 Fulllest hearts are slow to speak,  
 But a withered rose-leaf fluttered  
 Down upon the poet's cheek.



## SONG.

VIOLET ! sweet violet !

Thine eyes are full of tears ;

Are they wet

Even yet

With the thought of other years ?

Or with gladness are they full,

For the night so beautiful,

And longing for those far-off spheres ?

Loved one of my youth thou wast,

Of my merry youth,

And I see,

Tearfully,

All the fair and sunny past,

All its openness and truth,

Ever fresh and green in thee

As the moss is in the sea.

Thy little heart, that hath with love

Grown colored like the sky above,

On which thou lookest ever, —

Can it know

All the woe

Of hope for what returneth never,

All the sorrow and the longing

To these hearts of ours belonging ?

Out on it ! no foolish pining

For the sky

Dims thine eye,

Or for the stars so calmly shining ;

Like thee let this soul of mine

Take hue from that wherof I long,

Self-stayed and high, serene and strong,

Not satisfied with hoping — but divine.

Violet ! dear violet !

Thy blue eyes are only wet

With joy and love of Him who sent thee,

And for the fulfilling sense

Of that glad obedience

Which made thee all that Nature meant

thee !

## ROSALINE.

THOU look'dst on me all yesternight,

Thine eyes were blue, thy hair was bright

As when we murmured our troth-plight

Beneath the thick stars, Rosaline !

Thy hair was braided on thy head,

As on the day we two were wed,

Mine eyes scarce knew if thou wert dead,

But my shrunk heart knew, Rosaline !

The death-watch ticked behind the wall,

The blackness rustled like a pall,

The moaning wind did rise and fall

Among the bleak pines, Rosaline !

My heart beat thickly in mine ears :

The lids may shut out fleshly fears,

But still the spirit sees and hears,

Its eyes are lidless, Rosaline !

A wildness rushing suddenly,

A knowing some ill shape is nigh,

A wish for death, a fear to die,

Is not this vengeance, Rosaline ?

A loneliness that is not lone,

A love quite withered up and gone,

A strong soul ousted from its throne,

What wouldst thou further, Rosaline ?

'T is drear such moonless nights as these,

Strange sounds are out upon the breeze,

And the leaves shiver in the trees,

And then thou comest, Rosaline !

I seem to hear the mourners go,

With long black garments trailing slow,

And plumes anodding to and fro,

As once I heard them, Rosaline !

Thy shroud is all of snowy white,

And, in the middle of the night,

Thou standest moveless and upright,

Gazing upon me, Rosaline !

There is no sorrow in thine eyes,

But evermore that meek surprise, —

O God ! thy gentle spirit tries

To deem me guiltless, Rosaline !

Above thy grave the robin sings,

And swarms of bright and happy things

Flit all about with sunlit wings,

But I am cheerless, Rosaline !

The violets on the hillock toss,

The gravestone is o'ergrown with moss ;

For nature feels not any loss,

But I am cheerless, Rosaline !

I did not know when thou wast dead ;

A blackbird whistling overhead

Thrilled through my brain ; I would have

fled,

But dared not leave thee, Rosaline !

The sun rolled down, and very soon,

Like a great fire, the awful moon

Rose, stained with blood, and then a swoon

Crept chilly o'er me, Rosaline !

The stars came out ; and, one by one,

Each angel from his silver throne

Looked down and saw what I had done :  
I dared not hide me, Rosaline !  
I crouched ; I feared thy corpse would cry  
Against me to God's silent sky,  
I thought I saw the blue lips try  
To utter something, Rosaline !

I waited with a maddened grin  
To hear that voice all icy thin  
Slide forth and tell my deadly sin  
To hell and heaven, Rosaline !  
But no voice came, and then it seemed,  
That, if the very corpse had screamed,  
Thesound like sunshine glad had streamed  
Through that dark stillness, Rosaline !

And then, amid the silent night,  
I screamed with horrible delight,  
And in my brain an awful light  
Did seem to crackle, Rosaline !  
It is my curse ! sweet memories fall  
From me like snow, and only all  
Of that one night, like cold worms, crawl  
My doomed heart over, Rosaline !

Why wilt thou haunt me with thine eyes,  
Wherein such blessed memories,  
Such pitying forgiveness lies,  
Than hate more bitter, Rosaline !  
Woe 's me ! I know that love so high  
As thine, true soul, could never die,  
And with mean clay in churchyard lie, —  
Would it might be so, Rosaline !

#### A REQUIEM.

AY, pale and silent maiden,  
Cold as thou liest there,  
Thine was the sunniest nature  
That ever drew the air,  
The wildest and most wayward,  
And yet so gently kind,  
Thou seemedst but to body  
A breath of summer wind.

Into the eternal shadow  
That girds our life around,  
Into the infinite silence  
Wherewith Death's shore is bound,  
Thou hast gone forth, beloved !  
And I were mean to weep,  
That thou hast left Life's shallows,  
And dost possess the Deep.

Thou liest low and silent,  
Thy heart is cold and still,

Thine eyes are shut forever,  
And Death hath had his will ;  
He loved and would have taken,  
I loved and would have kept,  
We strove, — and he was stronger,  
And I have never wept.

Let him possess thy body,  
Thy soul is still with me,  
More sunny and more gladsome  
Than it was wont to be :  
Thy body was a fetter  
That bound me to the flesh,  
Thank God that it is broken,  
And now I live afresh !

Now I can see thee clearly ;  
The dusky cloud of clay,  
That hid thy starry spirit,  
Is rent and blown away :  
To earth I give thy body,  
Thy spirit to the sky,  
I saw its bright wings growing,  
And knew that thou must fly.

Now I can love thee truly,  
For nothing comes between  
The senses and the spirit,  
The seen and the unseen ;  
Lifts the eternal shadow,  
The silence bursts apart,  
And the soul's boundless future  
Is present in my heart.

#### A PARABLE.

WORN and footsore was the Prophet,  
When he gained the holy hill ;  
" God has left the earth," he murmured,  
" Here his presence lingers still.

" God of all the olden prophets,  
Wilt thou speak with men no more ?  
Have I not as truly served thee  
As thy chosen ones of yore ?

" Hear me, guider of my fathers,  
Lo ! a humble heart is mine ;  
By thy mercy I beseech thee  
Grant thy servant but a sign !"

Bowing then his head, he listened  
For an answer to his prayer ;  
No loud burst of thunder followed,  
No a murmur stirred the air : —

But the tuft of moss before him  
 Opened while he waited yet,  
 And, from out the rock's hard bosom,  
 Sprang a tender violet.

"God! I thank thee," said the Prophet;  
 "Hard of heart and blind was I,  
 Looking to the holy mountain  
 For the gift of prophecy.

"Still thou speakest with thy children  
 Freely as in eld sublime;  
 Humbleness, and love, and patience,  
 Still give empire over time.

"Had I trusted in my nature,  
 And had faith in lowly things,  
 Thou thyself wouldst then have sought  
 me,  
 And set free my spirit's wings.

"But I looked for signs and wonders,  
 That o'er men should give me sway;  
 Thirsting to be more than mortal,  
 I was even less than clay.

"Ere I entered on my journey,  
 As I girt my loins to start,  
 Ran to me my little daughter,  
 The beloved of my heart; —

"In her hand she held a flower,  
 Like to this as like may be,  
 Which, beside my very threshold,  
 She had plucked and brought to me."

## SONG.

O MOONLIGHT deep and tender,  
 A year and more agone,  
 Your mist of golden splendor  
 Round my betrothal shone!

O elm-leaves dark and dewy,  
 The very same ye seem,  
 The low wind trembles through ye,  
 Ye murmur in my dream!

O river, dim with distance,  
 Flow thus forever by,  
 A part of my existence  
 Within your heart doth lie!

O stars, ye saw our meeting,  
 Two beings and one soul,  
 Two hearts so madly beating  
 To mingle and be whole!

O happy night, deliver  
 Her kisses back to me,  
 Or keep them all, and give her  
 A blissful dream of me!

## SONNETS.

## I.

TO A. C. L.

THROUGH suffering and sorrow thou hast  
 passed

To show us what a woman true may be:  
 They have not taken sympathy from thee,  
 Nor made thee any other than thou wast,  
 Save as some tree, which, in a sudden

blast,  
 Sheddeth those blossoms, that are weakly  
 grown,

Upon the air, but keepeth every one  
 Whose strength gives warrant of good  
 fruit at last:

So thou hast shed some blooms of gay-  
 ety,

But never one of steadfast cheerfulness;

Nor hath thy knowledge of adversity  
 Robbed thee of any faith in happiness,  
 But rather cleared thine inner eyes to see  
 How many simple ways there are to bless.

## II.

WHAT were I, Love, if I were stripped of  
 thee,

If thine eyes shut me out whereby I live,  
 Thou, who unto my calmer soul dost give  
 Knowledge, and Truth, and holy Mys-  
 tery,

Wherein Truth mainly lies for those who  
 see

Beyond the earthly and the fugitive,  
 Who in the grandeur of the soul believe,  
 And only in the Infinite are free!



Without thee I were naked, bleak, and  
bare  
As yon dead cedar on the sea-cliff's brow ;  
And Nature's teachings, which come to  
me now,  
Common and beautiful as light and air,  
Would be as fruitless as a stream which  
still  
Slips through the wheel of some old  
ruined mill.

## III.

I WOULD not have this perfect love of  
ours  
Grow from a single root, a single stem,  
Bearing no goodly fruit, but only flowers  
That idly hide life's iron diadem :  
It should grow away like that Eastern  
tree  
Whose limbs take root and spread forth  
constantly ;  
That love for one, from which there doth  
not spring  
Wide love for all, is but a worthless thing.  
Not in another world, as poets prate,  
Dwell we apart above the tide of things,  
High floating o'er earth's clouds on faery  
wings ;  
But our pure love doth ever elevate  
Into a holy bond of brotherhood  
All earthly things, making them pure  
and good.

## IV.

"FOR this true nobleness I seek in vain,  
In woman and in man I find it not ;  
I almost weary of my earthly lot,  
My life-springs are dried up with burn-  
ing pain."  
Thou find'st it not? I pray thee look  
again,  
Look *inward* through the depths of thine  
own soul.  
How is it with thee? Art thou sound  
and whole?  
Doth narrow search show thee no earthly  
stain?  
BE NOBLE! and the nobleness that lies  
In other men, sleeping, but never dead,  
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own ;  
Then wilt thou see it gleam in many eyes,  
Then will pure light around thy path be  
shed,  
And thou wilt nevermore be sad and  
lone.

## V.

## TO THE SPIRIT OF KEATS.

GREAT soul, thou sittest with me in my  
room,  
Uplifting me with thy vast, quiet eyes,  
On whose full orbs, with kindly lustre, lies  
The twilight warmth of ruddy ember-  
gloom:  
Thy clear, strong tones will oft bring sud-  
den bloom  
Of hope secure, to him who lonely cries,  
Wrestling with the young poet's agonies,  
Neglect and scorn, which seem a certain  
doom:  
Yes! the few words which, like great  
thunder-drops,  
Thy large heart down to earth shook  
doubtfully,  
Thrilled by the inward lightning of its  
might,  
Serene and pure, like gushing joy of light,  
Shall track the eternal chords of Destiny,  
After the moon-led pulse of ocean stops.

## VI.

GREAT Truths are portions of the soul of  
man ;  
Great souls are portions of Eternity ;  
Each drop of blood that e'er through true  
heart ran  
With lofty message, ran for thee and me ;  
For God's law, since the starry song began,  
Hath been, and still forevermore must be,  
That every deed which shall outlast Time's  
span  
Must spur the soul to be erect and free ;  
Slave is no word of deathless lineage  
sprung ;  
Too many noble souls have thought and  
died,  
Too many mighty poets lived and sung,  
And our good Saxon, from lips purified  
With martyr-fire, throughout the world  
hath rung  
Too long to have God's holy cause denied.

## VII.

I ASK not for those thoughts, that sudden  
leap  
From being's sea, like the isle-seeming  
Kraken,  
With whose great rise the ocean all is  
shaken



And a heart-tremble quivers through the deep ;  
 Give me that growth which some per-  
 chance deem sleep,  
 Wherewith the steadfast coral-stems up-  
 rise,  
 Which, by the toil of gathering energies,  
 Their upward way into clear sunshine  
 keep,  
 Until, by Heaven's sweetest influences,  
 Slowly and slowly spreads a speck of  
 green  
 Into a pleasant island in the seas,  
 Where, mid tall palms, the cane-roofed  
 home is seen,  
 And wearied men shall sit at sunset's  
 hour,  
 Hearing the leaves and loving God's dear  
 power.

## VIII.

TO M. W., ON HER BIRTHDAY.

MAIDEN, when such a soul as thine is  
 born,  
 The morning-stars their ancient music  
 make,  
 And, joyful, once again their song awake,  
 Long silent now with melancholy scorn ;  
 And thou, not mindless of so blest a  
 morn,  
 By no least deed its harmony shalt break,  
 But shalt to that high chime thy foot-  
 steps take,  
 Through life's most darksome passes un-  
 forlorn ;  
 Therefore from thy pure faith thou shalt  
 not fall,  
 Therefore shalt thou be ever fair and  
 free,  
 And in thine every motion musical  
 As summer air, majestic as the sea,  
 A mystery to those who creep and crawl  
 Through Time, and part it from Eternity.

## IX.

My Love, I have no fear that thou  
 shouldst die ;  
 Albeit I ask no fairer life than this  
 Whose numbering-clock is still thy gen-  
 tle kiss,  
 While Time and Peace with hands en-  
 lock'd fly, —  
 Yet care I not where in Eternity

We live and love, well knowing that  
 there is  
 No backward step for those who feel the  
 bliss  
 Of Faith as their most lofty yearnings  
 high :  
 Love hath so purified my being's core,  
 Meseems I scarcely should be startled,  
 even,  
 To find, some morn, that thou hadst gone  
 before ;  
 Since, with thy love, this knowledge too  
 was given,  
 Which each calm day doth strengthen  
 more and more,  
 That they who love are but one step from  
 Heaven.

## X.

I CANNOT think that thou shouldst pass  
 away,  
 Whose life to mine is an eternal law,  
 A piece of nature that can have no flaw,  
 A new and certain sunrise every day ;  
 But, if thou art to be another ray  
 About the Sun of Life, and art to live  
 Free from what part of thee was fugitive,  
 The debt of Love I will more fully pay,  
 Not downcast with the thought of thee  
 so high,  
 But rather raised to be a nobler man,  
 And more divine in my humanity,  
 As knowing that the waiting eyes which  
 scan  
 My life are lighted by a purer being,  
 And ask high, calm-browed deeds, with  
 it agreeing.

## XI.

THERE never yet was flower fair in vain,  
 Let classic poets rhyme it as they will ;  
 The seasons toil that it may blow again,  
 And summer's heart doth feel its every ill ;  
 Nor is a true soul ever born for naught ;  
 Wherever any such hath lived and died,  
 There hath been something for true free-  
 dom wrought,  
 Some bulwark levelled on the evil side :  
 Toil on, then, Greatness ! thou art in the  
 right,  
 However narrow souls may call thee  
 wrong ;  
 Be as thou wouldst be in thine own clear  
 sight,

And so thou shalt be in the world's ere-  
long;  
For worldlings cannot, struggle as they  
may,  
From man's great soul one great thought  
hide away.

## XII.

## SUB PONDERE CRESCIT.

THE hope of Truth grows stronger, day  
by day ;  
I hear the soul of Man around me wak-  
ing,  
Like a great sea, its frozen fetters break-  
ing,  
And flinging up to heaven its sunlit spray,  
Tossing huge continents in scornful  
play,  
And crushing them, with din of grind-  
ing thunder,  
That makes old emptinesses stare in won-  
der ;  
The memory of a glory passed away  
Lingers in every heart, as, in the shell,  
Resounds the bygone freedom of the sea,  
And every hour new signs of promise  
tell,  
That the great soul shall once again be  
free,  
For high, and yet more high, the mur-  
murs swell  
Of inward strife for truth and liberty.

## XIII.

BELOVED, in the noisy city here,  
The thought of thee can make all tur-  
moil cease ;  
Around my spirit, folds thy spirit clear  
Its still, soft arms, and circles it with  
peace ;  
There is no room for any doubt or fear  
In souls so overfilled with love's increase,  
There is no memory of the bygone year  
But growth in heart's and spirit's perfect  
ease :  
How hath our love, half nebulous at first,  
Rounded itself into a full-orbed sun !  
How have our lives and wills (as haply  
erst  
They were, ere this forgetfulness begun)  
Through all their earthly distances out-  
burst,  
And melted, like two rays of light in  
one !

## XIV.

ON READING WORDSWORTH'S SONNETS  
IN DEFENCE OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

As the broad ocean endlessly upheaveth,  
With the majestic beating of his heart,  
The mighty tides, whereof its rightful  
part  
Each sea-wide bay and little weed re-  
ceiveth,  
So, through his soul who earnestly be-  
lieveth,  
Life from the universal Heart doth flow,  
Whereby some conquest of the eternal  
Woe,  
By instinct of God's nature, he achiev-  
eth :  
A fuller pulse of this all-powerful beauty  
Into the poet's gulf-like heart doth tide,  
And he more keenly feels the glorious  
duty  
Of serving Truth, despised and cruci-  
fied, —  
Happy, unknowing sect or creed, to rest,  
And feel God flow forever through his  
breast.

## XV.

## THE SAME CONTINUED.

ONCE hardly in a cycle blossometh  
A flower-like soul ripe with the seeds of  
song,  
A spirit foreordained to cope with wrong,  
Whose divine thoughts are natural as  
breath,  
Who the old Darkness thickly scattereth  
With starry words, that shoot prevailing  
light  
Into the deeps, and wither, with the blight  
Of serene Truth, the coward heart of  
Death :  
Woe, if such spirit thwart its errand high,  
And mock with lies the longing soul of  
man !  
Yet one age longer must true Culture lie,  
Soothing her bitter fetters as she can,  
Until new messages of love outstart  
At the next beating of the infinite Heart

## XVI.

## THE SAME CONTINUED.

THE love of all things springs from love  
of one ;  
Wider the soul's horizon hourly grows,

And over it with fuller glory flows  
 The sky-like spirit of God ; a hope begun  
 In doubt and darkness 'neath a fairer sun  
 Cometh to fruitage, if it be of Truth ;  
 And to the law of meekness, faith, and  
 ruth,  
 By inward sympathy, shall all be won :  
 This thou shouldst know, who, from the  
 painted feature  
 Of shifting Fashion, couldst thy brethren  
 turn  
 Unto the love of ever-youthful Nature,  
 And of a beauty fadeless and eterne ;  
 And always 't is the saddest sight to see  
 An old man faithless in Humanity.

## XVII.

## THE SAME CONTINUED.

A POET cannot strive for despotism ;  
 His harp falls shattered ; for it still must  
 be  
 The instinct of great spirits to be free,  
 And the sworn foes of cunning barba-  
 rism :  
 He who has deepest searched the wide  
 abysm  
 Of that life-giving Soul which men call  
 fate,  
 Knows that to put more faith in lies and  
 hate  
 Than truth and love is the true atheism :  
 Upward the soul forever turns her eyes :  
 The next hour always shames the hour  
 before ;  
 One beauty, at its highest, prophesies  
 That by whose side it shall seem mean  
 and poor  
 No Godlike thing knows aught of less  
 and less,  
 But widens to the boundless Perfectness.

## XVIII.

## THE SAME CONTINUED.

THEREFORE think not the Past is wise  
 alone,  
 For Yesterday knows nothing of the Best,  
 And thou shalt love it only as the nest  
 Whence glory-winged things to Heaven  
 have flown :  
 To the great Soul only are all things  
 known ;  
 Present and future are to her as past,

While she in glorious madness doth fore-  
 cast  
 That perfect bud, which seems a flower  
 full-blown  
 To each new Prophet, and yet always opes  
 Fuller and fuller with each day and hour,  
 Heartening the soul with odor of fresh  
 hopes,  
 And longings high, and gushings of wide  
 power,  
 Yet never is or shall be fully blown  
 Save in the forethought of the Eternal  
 One.

## XIX.

## THE SAME CONCLUDED.

FAR 'yond this narrow parapet of Time,  
 With eyes uplift, the poet's soul should  
 look  
 Into the Endless Promise, nor should  
 brook  
 One prying doubt to shake his faith sub-  
 lime ;  
 To him the earth is ever in her prime  
 And dewiness of morning ; he can see  
 Good lying hid, from all eternity,  
 Within the teeming womb of sin and  
 crime ;  
 His soul should not be cramped by any bar,  
 His nobleness should be so Godlike high,  
 That his least deed is perfect as a star,  
 His common look majestic as the sky,  
 And all o'erflooded with a light from far,  
 Undimmed by clouds of weak mortality.

## XX.

## TO M. O. S.

MARY, since first I knew thee, to this  
 hour,  
 My love hath deepened, with my wiser  
 sense  
 Of what in Woman is to reverence ;  
 Thy clear heart, fresh as e'er was forest-  
 flower,  
 Still opens more to me its beauteous  
 dower ; —  
 But let praise hush, — Love asks no evi-  
 dence  
 To prove itself well-placed ; we know not  
 whence  
 It gleans thestraws that thatch its humble  
 bower :  
 We can but say we found it in the heart,



Spring of all sweetest thoughts, arch foe  
 of blame,  
 Sower of flowers in the dusty mart,  
 Pure vestal of the poet's holy flame,—  
 This is enough, and we have done our  
 part  
 If we but keep it spotless as it came.

## XXI.

OUR love is not a fading, earthly flower:  
 Its winged seed dropped down from  
 Paradise,  
 And, nursed by day and night, by sun  
 and shower,  
 Doth momentarily to fresher beauty rise:  
 To us the leafless autumn is not bare,  
 Nor winter's rattling boughs lack lusty  
 green.  
 Our summer hearts make summer's ful-  
 ness, where  
 No leaf, or bud, or blossom may be seen:  
 For nature's life in love's deep life doth  
 lie,  
 Love,—whose forgetfulness is beauty's  
 death,  
 Whose mystic key these cells of Thou  
 and I  
 Into the infinite freedom openeth,  
 And makes the body's dark and narrow  
 grate  
 The wide-flung leaves of Heaven's own  
 palace-gate.

## XXII.

## IN ABSENCE.

THESE rugged, wintry days I scarce  
 could bear,  
 Did I not know, that, in the early spring,  
 When wild March winds upon their  
 errands sing,  
 Thou wouldst return, bursting on this  
 still air,  
 Like those same winds, when, startled  
 from their lair,  
 They hunt up violets, and free swift  
 brooks  
 From icy cares, even as thy clear looks  
 Bid my heart bloom, and sing, and break  
 all care:  
 When drops with welcome rain the  
 April day,  
 My flowers shall find their April in thine  
 eyes,

Save there the rain in dreamy clouds  
 doth stay,  
 As loath to fall out of those happy skies;  
 Yet sure, my love, thou art most like to  
 May,  
 That comes with steady sun when April  
 dies.

## XXIII.

## WENDELL PHILLIPS.

HE stood upon the world's broad  
 threshold; wide  
 The din of battle and of slaughter rose;  
 He saw God stand upon the weaker side;  
 That sank in seeming loss before its foes:  
 Many there were who made great haste  
 and sold  
 Unto the cunning enemy their swords,  
 He scorned their gifts of fame, and  
 power, and gold,  
 And, underneath their soft and flowery  
 words,  
 Heard the cold serpent hiss; therefore  
 he went  
 And humbly joined him to the weaker  
 part,  
 Fanatic named, and fool, yet well con-  
 tent  
 So he could be the nearer to God's heart,  
 And feel its solemn pulses sending blood  
 Through all the wide-spread veins of  
 endless good.

## XXIV.

## THE STREET.

THEY pass me by like shadows, crowds  
 on crowds,  
 Dim ghosts of men, that hover to and fro,  
 Hugging their bodies round them like  
 thin shrouds  
 Wherein their souls were buried long ago:  
 They trampled on their youth, and faith,  
 and love,  
 They cast their hope of human-kind away,  
 With Heaven's clear messages they madly  
 strove,  
 And conquered, - and their spirits turned  
 to clay:  
 Lo! how they wander round the world,  
 their grave,  
 Whose ever-gaping maw by such is fed,  
 Gibbering at living men, and idly rave,  
 "We, only, truly live, but ye are dead."



Alas ! poor fools, the anointed eye may  
 trace  
 A dead soul's epitaph in every face !

## XXV.

I GRIEVE not that ripe Knowledge takes  
 away  
 The charm that Nature to my childhood  
 wore,  
 For, with that insight, cometh, day by  
 day,  
 A greater bliss than wonder was before ;  
 The real doth not clip the poet's wings, —  
 To win the secret of a weed's plain heart  
 Reveals some clew to spiritual things,  
 And stumbling guess becomes firm-footed  
 art :  
 Flowers are not flowers unto the poet's  
 eyes,  
 Their beauty thrills him by an inward  
 sense ;  
 He knows that outward seemings are but  
 lies,  
 Or, at the most, but earthly shadows,  
 whence  
 The soul that looks within for truth may  
 guess  
 The presence of some wondrous heaven-  
 liness.

## XXVI.

TO J. R. GIDDINGS.

GIDDINGS, far rougher names than thine  
 have grown  
 Smoother than honey on the lips of men ;  
 And thou shalt aye be honorably known,  
 As one who bravely used his tongue and  
 pen,  
 As best befits a freeman, — even for  
 those  
 To whom our Law's unblushing front  
 denies  
 A right to plead against the lifelong  
 woes  
 Which are the Negro's glimpse of Free-  
 dom's skies :  
 Fear nothing, and hope all things, as  
 the Right  
 Alone may do securely ; every hour  
 The thrones of Ignorance and ancient  
 Night  
 Lose somewhat of their long-usurp'd  
 power,

And Freedom's lightest word can make  
 them shiver  
 With a base dread that clings to them  
 forever.

## XXVII.

I THOUGHT our love at full, but I did err ;  
 Joy's wreath drooped o'er mine eyes ; I  
 could not see  
 That sorrow in our happy world must be  
 Love's deepest spokesman and inter-  
 preter :  
 But, as a mother feels her child first stir  
 Under her heart, so felt I instantly  
 Deep in my soul another bond to thee  
 Thrill with that life we saw depart from  
 her ;  
 O mother of our angel child ! twice dear !  
 Death knits as well as parts, and still,  
 I wis,  
 Her tender radiance shall infold us here,  
 Even as the light, borne up by inward  
 bliss,  
 Threads the void glooms of space with-  
 out a fear,  
 To print on farthest stars her pitying kiss.

## L'ENVOI.

WHETHER my heart hath wiser grown  
 or not,  
 In these three years, since I to thee in-  
 scribed,  
 Mine own betrothed, the firstlings of my  
 muse, —  
 Poor windfalls of unripe experience,  
 Young buds plucked hastily by childish  
 hands  
 Not patient to await more full-blown  
 flowers, —  
 At least it hath seen more of life and  
 men,  
 And pondered more, and grown a shade  
 more sad ;  
 Yet with no loss of hope or settled trust  
 In the benignness of that Providence  
 Which shapes from out our elements  
 awry  
 The grace and order that we wonder at,  
 The mystic harmony of right and wrong,  
 Both working out His wisdom and our  
 good :  
 A trust, Beloved, chiefly learned of thee,  
 Who hast that gift of patient tenderness,  
 The instinctive wisdom of a woman's  
 heart.

They tell us that our land was made for  
 song,  
 With its huge rivers and sky-piercing  
 peaks,  
 Its sealike lakes and mighty cataracts,  
 Its forests vast and hoar, and prairies  
 wide,  
 And mounds that tell of wondrous tribes  
 extinct.  
 But Poesy springs not from rocks and  
 woods ;  
 Her womb and cradle are the human  
 heart,  
 And she can find a nobler theme for song  
 In the most loathsome man that blasts  
 the sight  
 Than in the broad expanse of sea and  
 shore  
 Between the frozen deserts of the poles.  
 All nations have their message from on  
 high,  
 Each the messiah of some central thought,  
 For the fulfilment and delight of Man :  
 One has to teach that labor is divine ;  
 Another Freedom ; and another Mind ;  
 And all, that God is open-eyed and just,  
 The happy centre and calm heart of all.

Are, then, our woods, our mountains,  
 and our streams,  
 Needful to teach our poets how to sing ?  
 O maiden rare, far other thoughts were  
 ours,  
 When we have sat by ocean's foaming  
 marge,  
 And watched the waves leap roaring on  
 the rocks,  
 Than young Leander and his Hero had,  
 Gazing from Sestos to the other shore.  
 The moon looks down and ocean worships  
 her,  
 Stars rise and set, and seasons come and go  
 Even as they did in Homer's elder time,  
 But we behold them not with Grecian  
 eyes :  
 Then they were types of beauty and of  
 strength,  
 But now of freedom, unconfined and pure,  
 Subject alone to Order's higher law.  
 What cares the Russian serf or Southern  
 slave  
 Though we should speak as man spake  
 never yet  
 Of gleaming Hudson's broad magnifi-  
 cence,  
 Or green Niagara's never-ending roar ?  
 Our country hath a gospel of her own

To preach and practise before all the  
 world,—  
 The freedom and divinity of man,  
 The glorious claims of human brother-  
 hood,—  
 Which to pay nobly, as a freeman should,  
 Gains the sole wealth that will not fly  
 away,—  
 And the soul's fealty to none but God.  
 These are realities, which make the  
 shows  
 Of outward Nature, be they ne'er so  
 grand,  
 Seem small, and worthless, and contempt-  
 ible.  
 These are the mountain-summits for our  
 bards,  
 Which stretch far upward into heaven  
 itself,  
 And give such wide-spread and exulting  
 view  
 Of hope, and faith, and onward destiny,  
 That shrunk Parnassus to a molehill  
 dwindles.  
 Our new Atlantis, like a morning-star,  
 Silvers the mirk face of slow-yielding  
 Night,  
 The herald of a fuller truth than yet  
 Hath gleamed upon the upraised face of  
 Man  
 Since the earth glittered in her stainless  
 prime,—  
 Of a more glorious sunrise than of old  
 Drew wondrous melodies from Memnon  
 huge,  
 Yea, draws them still, though now he sit  
 waist-deep  
 In the ingulfing flood of whirling sand,  
 And look across the wastes of endless  
 gray,  
 Sole wreck, where once his hundred-gated  
 Thebes  
 Pained with her mighty hum the calm,  
 blue heaven :  
 Shall the dull stone pay grateful orisons,  
 And we till noonday bar the splendor  
 out,  
 Lest it reproach and chide our sluggard  
 hearts,  
 Warm-nestled in the down of Prejudice,  
 And be content, though clad with angel-  
 wings,  
 Close-clipped, to hop about from perch  
 to perch,  
 In paltry cages of dead men's dead  
 thoughts ?  
 O, rather, like the skylark, soar and sing,

And let our gushing songs befit the dawn  
And sunrise, and the yet unshaken dew  
Brimming the chalice of each full-blown  
hope,

Whose blithe front turns to greet the  
growing day !

Never had poets such high call before,  
Never can poets hope for higher one,  
And, if they be but faithful to their trust,  
Earth will remember them with love and  
joy,

And O, far better, God will not forget.  
For he who settles Freedom's principles  
Writes the death-warrant of all tyranny ;  
Who speaks the truth stabs Falsehood to  
the heart,

And his mere word makes despots tremble  
more

Than ever Brutus with his dagger could.  
Wait for no hints from waterfalls or  
woods,

Nor dream that tales of red men, brute  
and fierce,

Repay the finding of this Western World,  
Or needed half the globe to give them  
birth :

Spirit supreme of Freedom ! not for this  
Did great Columbus tame his eagle soul  
To jostle with the daws that perch in  
courts ;

Not for this, friendless, on an unknown  
sea,

Coping with mad waves and more muti-  
nous spirits,

Battled he with the dreadful ache at  
heart

Which tempts, with devilish subtleties  
of doubt,

The hermit of that loneliest solitude,  
The silent desert of a great New Thought ;

Though loud Niagara were to-day struck  
dumb,

Yet would this cataract of boiling life  
Rush plunging on and on to endless  
deeps,

And utter thunder till the world shall  
cease, —

A thunder worthy of the poet's song,  
And which alone can fill it with true life.  
The high evangel to our country granted  
Could make apostles, yea, with tongues  
of fire,

Of hearts half-darkened back again to  
clay !

'T is the soul only that is national,  
And he who pays true loyalty to that  
Alone can claim the wreath of patriotism.

Beloved ! if I wander far and oft  
From that which I believe, and feel, and  
know,

Thou wilt forgive, not with a sorrowing  
heart,

But with a strengthened hope of better  
things ;

Knowing that I, though often blind and  
false

To those I love, and O, more false than  
all

Unto myself, have been most true to thee,  
And that whoso in one thing hath been  
true

Can be as true in all. Therefore thy hope  
May yet not prove unfruitful, and thy love  
Meet, day by day, with less unworthy  
thanks,

Whether, as now, we journey hand in  
hand,

Or, parted in the body, yet are one  
In spirit and the love of holy things.

## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

### ▲ LEGEND OF BRITTANY.

#### PART FIRST.

##### I.

FAIR as a summer dream was Margaret,—  
Such dream as in a poet's soul might  
start,  
Musing of old loves while the moon doth  
set :

Her hair was not more sunny than her  
heart,

Though like a natural golden coro-  
net

It circled her dear head with careless  
art,

Mocking the sunshine, that would fain  
have lent

To its frank grace a richer ornament.



## II.

His loved one's eyes could poet ever  
 speak,  
 So kind, so dewy, and so deep were  
 hers, —  
 But, while he strives, the choicest phrase,  
 too weak,  
 Their glad reflection in his spirit blurs ;  
 As one may see a dream dissolve and  
 break  
 Out of his grasp when he to tell it stirs,  
 Like that sad Dryad doomed no more to  
 bless  
 The mortal who revealed her loveliness.

## III.

She dwelt forever in a region bright,  
 Peopled with living fancies of her own,  
 Where naught could come but visions of  
 delight,  
 Far, far aloof from earth's eternal moan :  
 A summer cloud thrilled through with  
 rosy light,  
 Floating beneath the blue sky all alone,  
 Her spirit wandered by itself, and won  
 A golden edge from some unsetting sun.

## IV.

The heart grows richer that its lot is  
 poor,  
 God blesses want with larger sympa-  
 thies,  
 Love enters gladliest at the humble door,  
 And makes the cot a palace with his  
 eyes ;  
 So Margaret's heart a softer beauty wore,  
 And grew in gentleness and patience  
 wise,  
 For she was but a simple herdsman's  
 child,  
 A lily chance-sown in the rugged wild.

## V.

There was no beauty of the wood or field  
 But she its fragrant bosom-secret knew,  
 Nor any but to her would freely yield  
 Some grace that in her soul took root  
 and grew :  
 Nature to her shone as but now revealed,  
 All rosy-fresh with innocent morning  
 dew,  
 And looked into her heart with dim, sweet  
 eyes  
 That left it full of sylvan memories.

## VI.

O, what a face was hers to brighten light,  
 And give back sunshine with an added  
 glow,  
 To wile each moment with a fresh de-  
 light,  
 And part of memory's best content-  
 ment grow !  
 O, how her voice, as with an inmate's  
 right,  
 Into the strangest heart would welcome  
 go,  
 And make it sweet, and ready to become  
 Of white and gracious thoughts the cho-  
 sen home !

## VII.

None looked upon her but he straight-  
 way thought  
 Of all the greenest depths of country  
 cheer,  
 And into each one's heart was freshly  
 brought  
 What was to him the sweetest time of  
 year,  
 So was her every look and motion fraught  
 With out-of-door delights and forest  
 lere ;  
 Not the first violet on a woodland lea  
 Seemed a more visible gift of Spring than  
 she.

## VIII.

Is love learned only out of poets' books ?  
 Is there not somewhat in the dropping  
 flood,  
 And in the nunneries of silent nooks,  
 And in the murmured longing of the  
 wood,  
 That could make Margaret dream of love-  
 lorn looks,  
 And stir a thrilling mystery in her  
 blood  
 More trembly secret than Aurora's tear  
 Shed in the bosom of an eglare ?

## IX.

Full many a sweet forewarning hath the  
 mind,  
 Full many a whispering of vague desire,  
 Ere comes the nature destined to unbind  
 Its virgin zone, and all its deeps in-  
 spire, —  
 Low stirrings in the leaves, before the  
 wind  
 Wake all the green strings of the for-  
 est lyre,



Faint heatings in the calyx, ere the rose  
Its warm voluptuous breast doth all un-  
close.

## X.

Long in its dim recesses pines the spirit,  
Wildered and dark, despairingly alone ;  
Though many a shape of beauty wander  
near it,  
And many a wild and half-remembered  
tone  
Tremble from the divine abyss to cheer it,  
Yet still it knows that there is only one  
Before whom it can kneel and tribute  
bring,  
At once a happy vassal and a king.

## XI.

To feel a want, yet scarce know what it  
is,  
To seek one nature that is always new,  
Whose glance is warmer than another's  
kiss,  
Whom we can bare our inmost beauty  
to,  
Nor feel deserted afterwards, — for this  
But with our destined co-mate we can  
do, —  
Such longing instinct fills the mighty  
scope  
Of the young soul with one mysterious  
hope.

## XII.

So Margaret's heart grew brimming with  
the lore  
Of love's enticing secrets; and although  
She had found none to cast it down be-  
fore,  
Yet oft to Fancy's chapel she would go  
To pay her vows, and count the rosary  
o'er  
Of her love's promised graces: — haply  
so  
Miranda's hope had pictured Ferdinand  
Long ere the gaunt wave tossed him on  
the strand.

## XIII.

A new-made star that swims the lonely  
gloom,  
Unwedded yet and longing for the sun,  
Whose beams, the bride-gifts of the lav-  
ish groom,  
Blithely to crown the virgin planet  
run,  
Her being was, watching to see the bloom

Of love's fresh sunrise roofing one by  
one  
Its clouds with gold, a triumph-arch to be  
For him who came to hold her heart in  
fee.

## XIV.

Not far from Margaret's cottage dwelt a  
knight  
Of the proud Templars, a sworn celib-  
bate,  
Whose heart in secret fed upon the light  
And dew of her ripe beauty, through  
the grate  
Of his close vow catching what gleams  
he might  
Of the free heaven, and cursing all too  
late  
The cruel faith whose black walls hemmed  
him in  
And turned life's crowning bliss to deadly  
sin.

## XV.

For he had met her in the wood by chance,  
And, having drunk her beauty's wil-  
dering spell,  
His heart shook like the pennon of a lance  
That quivers in a breeze's sudden swell,  
And thenceforth, in a close-infolded  
trance,  
From mistily golden deep to deep he  
fell ;  
Till earth did waver and fade far away  
Beneath the hope in whose warm arms  
he lay.

## XVI.

A dark, proud man he was, whose half-  
blown youth  
Had shed its blossoms even in opening,  
Leaving a few that with more winning  
ruth  
Trembling around grave manhood's  
stem might cling,  
More sad than cheery, making, in good  
sooth,  
Like the fringed gentian, a late autumn  
spring: —  
A twilight nature, braided light and  
gloom,  
A youth half-smiling by an open tomb.

## XVII.

Fair as an angel, who yet inly wore  
A wrinkled heart foreboding his new  
fall ;

Who saw him alway wished to know him  
more,

As if he were some fate's defiant thrall  
And nursed a dreaded secret at his core;  
Little he loved, but power the most of  
all,

And that he seemed to scorn, as one who  
knew

By what foul paths men choose to crawl  
thereto.

## XVIII.

He had been noble, but some great de-  
ceit

Had turned his better instinct to a  
vice:

He strove to think the world was all a  
cheat,

That power and fame were cheap at  
any price,

That the sure way of being shortly great  
Was even to play life's game with  
loaded dice,

Since he had tried the honest play and  
found

That vice and virtue differed but in  
sound.

## XIX.

Yet Margaret's sight redeemed him for a  
space

From his own thralldom; man could  
never be

A hypocrite when first such maiden grace  
Smiled in upon his heart; the agony  
Of wearing all day long a lying face

Fell lightly from him, and, a moment  
free,

Erect with wakened faith his spirit stood  
And scorned the weakness of his demon-  
mood.

## XX.

Like a sweet wind-harp to him was her  
thought,

Which would not let the common air  
come near,

Till from its dim enchantment it had  
caught

A musical tenderness that brimmed his  
ear

With sweetness more ethereal than aught  
Save silver-dropping snatches that  
whilere

Rained down from some sad angel's  
faithful harp

To cool her fallen lover's anguish sharp.

## XXI.

Deep in the forest was a little dell  
High overarched with the leafy sweep,  
Of a broad oak, through whose gnawed  
roots there fell

A slender rill that sung itself to sleep  
Where its continuous toil had scooped a  
well

To please the fairy folk; breathlessly  
deep

The stillness was, save when the dream-  
ing brook

From its small urn a drizzly murmur  
shook.

## XXII.

The wooded hills sloped upward all  
around

With gradual rise, and made an even  
rim,

So that it seemed a mighty casque un-  
bound

From some huge Titan's brow to  
lighten him,

Ages ago, and left upon the ground,  
Where the slow soil had mossed it to  
the brim,

Till after countless centuries it grew  
Into this dell, the haunt of noontide dew.

## XXIII.

Dim vistas, sprinkled o'er with sun-  
flecked green,

Wound through the thickset trunks  
on every side,

And, toward the west, in fancy might be  
seen

A gothic window in its blazing pride,  
When the low sun, two arching elms  
between,

Lit up the leaves beyond, which,  
autumn-dyed

With lavish hues, would into splendor  
start,

Shaming the labored panes of richest art.

## XXIV.

Here, leaning once against the old oak's  
trunk,

Mordred, for such was the young  
Templar's name,

Saw Margaret come; unseen, the falcon  
shrunk

From the meek dove; sharp thrills of  
tingling flame

Made him forget that he was vowed a  
monk,

And all the outworks of his pride o'er-  
came :  
Flooded he seemed with bright delicious  
pain,  
As if a star had burst within his brain.

## XXV.

Such power hath beauty and frank inno-  
cence :

A flower bloomed forth, that sunshine  
glad to bless,  
Even from his love's long leafless stem ;  
the sense

Of exile from Hope's happy realm grew  
less,  
And thoughts of childish peace, he knew  
not whence,

Thronged round his heart with many  
an old caress,  
Melting the frost there into pearly  
dew

That mirrored back his nature's morning-  
blue.

## XXVI.

She turned and saw him, but she felt no  
dread,

Her purity, like adamant mail,  
Did so encircle her ; and yet her head  
She drooped, and made her golden hair  
her veil,

Through which a glow of rosiest lustre  
spread,

Then faded, and anon she stood all  
pale,  
As snow o'er which a blush of northern-  
light

Suddenly reddens, and as soon grows  
white.

## XXVII.

She thought of Tristrem and of Lanci-  
lot,

Of all her dreams, and of kind fair-  
ies' might,

And how that dell was deemed a haunted  
spot,

Until there grew a mist before her  
sight,

And where the present was she half  
forgot,

Borne backward through the realms of  
old delight, —

Then, starting up awake, she would have  
gone,

Yet almost wished it might not be  
alone.

## XXVIII.

How they went home together through  
the wood,

And how all life seemed focussed into  
one

Thought-dazzling spot that set ablaze  
the blood,

What need to tell ? Fit language there  
is none

For the heart's deepest things. Who  
ever wood

As in his boyish hope he would have  
done ?

For, when the soul is fullest, the hushed  
tongue

Voicelessly trembles like a lute unstrung.

## XXIX.

But all things carry the heart's messages  
And know it not, nor doth the heart  
well know,

But Nature hath her will ; even as the  
bees,

Blithe go-betweens, fly singing to and  
fro

With the fruit-quickenning pollen ;—  
hard if these

Found not some all unthought-of way  
to show

Their secret each to each ; and so they  
did,

And one heart's flower-dust into the other  
slid.

## XXX.

Young hearts are free ; the selfish world  
it is

That turns them miserly and cold as  
stone,

And makes them clutch their fingers on  
the bliss

Which but in giving truly is their  
own ;—

She had no dreams of barter, asked not  
his,

But gave hers freely as she would have  
thrown

A rose to him, or as that rose gives forth  
Its generous fragrance, thoughtless of its  
worth.

## XXXI.

Her summer nature felt a need to bless,  
And a like longing to be blest again ;

So, from her sky-like spirit, gentleness  
Dropt ever like a sunlit fall of rain,

And his beneath drank in the bright  
caress



As thirstily as would a parched plain,  
That long hath watched the showers of  
sloping gray  
For ever, ever, falling far away.

## XXXII.

How should she dream of ill? the heart  
filled quite  
With sunshine, like the shepherd's-  
clock at noon,  
Closes its leaves around its warm delight;  
Whate'er in life is harsh or out of tune  
Is all shut out, no boding shade of blight  
Can pierce the opiate ether of its  
swoon:  
Love is but blind as thoughtful justice is,  
But naught can be so wanton-blind as  
bliss.

## XXXIII.

All beauty and all life he was to her;  
She questioned not his love, she only  
knew  
That she loved him, and not a pulse  
could stir  
In her whole frame but quivered  
through and through  
With this glad thought, and was a min-  
ister  
To do him fealty and service true,  
Like golden ripples hastening to the land  
To wreck their freight of sunshine on the  
strand.

## XXXIV.

O dewy dawn of love! oh hopes that are  
Hung high, like the cliff-swallow's  
perilous nest,  
Most like to fall when fullest, and that jar  
With every heavier billow! O unrest  
Than balmiest deeps of quiet sweeter far!  
How did ye triumph now in Marga-  
ret's breast,  
Making it readier to shrink and start  
Than quivering gold of the pond-lily's  
heart!

## XXXV.

Here let us pause: O, would the soul  
might ever  
Achieve its immortality in youth,  
When nothing yet hath damped its high  
endeavor  
After the starry energy of truth!  
Here let us pause, and for a moment sever  
This gleam of sunshine from the sad  
unruth  
That sometime comes to all, for it is good  
To lengthen to the last a sunny mood.

## PART SECOND.

## I.

As one who, from the sunshine and the  
green,  
Enters the solid darkness of a cave,  
Nor knows what precipice or pit unseen  
May yawn before him with its sudden  
grave,  
And, with hushed breath, doth often for-  
ward lean,  
Dreaming he hears the plashing of a  
wave  
Dimly below, or feels a damper air  
From out some dreary chasm, he knows  
not where;—

## II.

So, from the sunshine and the green of  
love,  
We enter on our story's darker part;  
And, though the horror of it well may  
move  
An impulse of repugnance in the heart,  
Yet let us think, that, as there's naught  
above  
The all-embracing atmosphere of Art,  
So also there is naught that falls below  
Her generous reach, though grimed with  
guilt and woe.

## III.

Her fittest triumph is to show that good  
Lurks in the heart of evil evermore,  
That love, though scorned, and outcast,  
and withstood,  
Can without end forgive, and yet have  
store;  
God's love and man's are of the selfsame  
blood,  
And He can see that always at the door  
Of foulest hearts the angel-nature yet  
Knocks to return and cancel all its debt.

## IV.

It ever is weak falsehood's destiny  
That her thick mask turns crystal to  
let through  
The unsuspecting eyes of honesty;  
But Margaret's heart was too sincere  
and true  
Aught but plain truth and faithfulness  
to see,  
And Mordred's for a time a little grew  
To be like hers, won by the mild reproof  
Of those kind eyes that kept all doubt  
aloof.



## V.

Full oft they met, as dawn and twilight  
meet

In northern climes; she full of grow-  
ing day

As he of darkness, which before her feet  
Shrank gradual, and faded quite away,  
Soon to return; for power had made  
love sweet

To him, and, when his will had gained  
full sway,  
The taste began to pall; for never power  
Can sate the hungry soul beyond an hour.

## VI.

He fell as doth the tempter ever fall,  
Even in the gaining of his loathsome  
end;

God doth not work as man works, but  
makes all

The crooked paths of ill to goodness  
tend;

Let him judge Margaret! If to be the  
thrall

Of love, and faith too generous to  
defend

Its very life from him she loved, be sin,  
What hope of grace may the seducer  
win?

## VII.

Grim-hearted world, that look'st with  
Levite eyes

On those poor fallen by too much  
faith in man,

She that upon thy freezing threshold lies,  
Starved to more sinning by thy savage  
ban,

Seeking that refuge because foulest vice  
More godlike than thy virtue is, whose  
span

Shuts out the wretched only, is more  
free

To enter heaven than thou shalt ever be!

## VIII.

Thou wilt not let her wash thy dainty  
feet

With such salt things as tears, or with  
rude hair

Dry them, soft Pharisee, that sit'st at  
meat

With him who made her such, and  
speak'st him fair,

Leaving God's wandering lamb the while  
to bleat

Unheeded, shivering in the pitiless air:

Thou hast made prisoned virtue show  
more wan  
And haggard than a vice to look upon.

## IX.

Now many months flew by, and weary  
grew

To Margaret the sight of happy things;  
Blight fell on all her flowers, instead of  
dew;

Shut round her heart were now the  
joyous wings

Wherewith it wont to soar; yet not un-  
true,

Though tempted much, her woman's  
nature clings

To its first pure belief, and with sad  
eyes

Looks backward o'er the gate of Paradise.

## X.

And so, though altered Mordred came  
less oft,

And winter frowned where spring had  
laughed before

In his strange eyes, yet half her sadness  
doffed,

And in her silent patience loved him  
more:

Sorrow had made her soft heart yet more  
soft,

And a new life within her own she  
bore

Which made her tenderer, as she felt it  
move

Beneath her breast, a refuge for her love.

## XI.

This babe, she thought, would surely  
bring him back,

And be a bond forever them between;  
Before its eyes the sullen tempest-rack

Would fade, and leave the face of  
heaven serene;

And love's return doth more than fill  
the lack,

Which in his absence withered the  
heart's green:

And yet a dim foreboding still would  
flit

Between her and her hope to darken it.

## XII.

She could not figure forth a happy fate,  
Even for this life from heaven so newly  
come;

The earth must needs be doubly desolate  
To him scarce parted from a fairer  
home :

Such boding heavier on her bosom sate  
One night, as, standing in the twilight  
gloom,

She strained her eyes beyond that dizzy  
verge

At whose foot faintly breaks the future's  
surge.

## XIII.

Poor little spirit ! naught but shame and  
woe

Nurse the sick heart whose lifeblood  
nurses thine :

Yet not those only ; love hath triumphed  
so,

As for thy sake makes sorrow more  
divine :

And yet, though thou be pure, the world  
is foe

To purity, if born in such a shrine ;

And, having trampled it for struggling  
thence,

Smiles to itself, and calls it Providence.

## XIV.

As thus she mused, a shadow seemed to  
rise

From out her thought, and turn to  
dreariness

All blissful hopes and sunny memories,  
And the quick blood would curdle up  
and press

About her heart, which seemed to shut  
its eyes

And hush itself, as who with shudder-  
ing guess

Harks through the gloom and dreads e'en  
now to feel

Through his hot breast the icy slide of  
steel.

## XV.

But, at that heart-beat, while in dread  
she was,

In the low wind the honeysuckles  
gleam,

A dewy thrill flits through the heavy  
grass,

And, looking forth, she saw, as in a  
dream,

Within the wood the moonlight's shad-  
owly mass :

Night's starry heart yearning to hers  
doth seem,

And the deep sky, full-hearted with the  
moon,  
Folds round her all the happiness of June.

## XVI.

What fear could face a heaven and earth  
like this ?

What silveriest cloud could hang 'neath  
such a sky ?

A tide of wondrous and unwonted bliss  
Rolls back through all her pulses sud-  
denly,

As if some seraph, who had learned to  
kiss

From the fair daughters of the world  
gone by,

Had wedded so his fallen light with hers,  
Such sweet, strange joy through soul and  
body stirs.

## XVII.

Now seek we Mordred : he who did not  
fear

The crime, yet fears the latent conse-  
quence :

If it should reach a brother Templar's ear,  
It haply might be made a good pretence  
To cheat him of the hope he held most  
dear ;

For he had spared no thought's or  
deed's expense,

That by and by might help his wish to  
clip

Its darling bride, — the high grandmas-  
tership.

## XVIII.

The apathy, ere a crime resolved is done,  
Is scarce less dreadful than remorse  
for crime ;

By no allurement can the soul be won  
From brooding o'er the weary creep of  
time :

Mordred stole forth into the happy sun,  
Striving to hum a scrap of Breton  
rhyme,

But the sky struck him speechless, and  
he tried

In vain to summon up his callous pride.

## XIX.

In the courtyard a fountain leaped away,  
A Triton blowing jewels through his  
shell

Into the sunshine ; Mordred turned away,  
Weary because the stone face did not  
tell

Of weariness, nor could he bear to-day,  
 Heartsick, to hear the patient sink  
 and swell  
 Of winds among the leaves, or golden bees  
 Drowsily humming in the orange-trees.

## XX.

All happy sights and sounds now came  
 to him

Like a reproach : he wandered far and  
 wide,

Following the lead of his unquiet whim,  
 But still there went a something at his  
 side

That made the cool breeze hot, the sun-  
 shine dim ;

It would not flee, it could not be defied,  
 He could not see it, but he felt it there,  
 By the damp chill that crept among his  
 hair.

## XXI.

Day wore at last ; the evening-star arose,  
 And throbbing in the sky grew red and  
 set ;

Then with a guilty, wavering step he goes  
 To the hid nook where they so oft had  
 met

In happier season, for his heart well  
 knows

That he is sure to find poor Margaret  
 Watching and waiting there with love-  
 lorn breast

Around her young dream's rudely scat-  
 tered nest.

## XXII.

Why follow here that grim old chronicle  
 Which counts the dagger-strokes and  
 drops of blood ?

Enough that Margaret by his mad steel  
 fell,

Unmoved by murder from her trusting  
 mood,

Smiling on him as Heaven smiles on Hell,  
 With a sad love, remembering when  
 he stood

Not fallen yet, the unsealer of her heart,  
 Of all her holy dreams the holiest part.

## XXIII.

His crime complete, scarce knowing what  
 he did,

(So goes the tale,) beneath the altar  
 there

In the high church the stiffening corpse  
 he hid,

And then, to 'scape that suffocating air,

Like a scared ghoul out of the porch he  
 slid ;

But his strained eyes saw blood-spots  
 everywhere,

And ghastly faces thrust themselves be-  
 tween

His soul and hopes of peace with blasting  
 mien.

## XXIV.

His heart went out within him like a  
 spark

Dropt in the sea ; wherever he made  
 bold

To turn his eyes, he saw, all stiff and  
 stark,

Pale Margaret lying dead ; the lavish  
 gold

Of her loose hair seemed in the cloudy  
 dark

To spread a glory, and a thousand-fold  
 More strangely pale and beautiful she  
 grew :

Her silence stabbed his conscience  
 through and through :

## XXV.

Or visions of past days, — a mother's eyes  
 That smiled down on the fair boy as  
 her knee,

Whose happy upturned face to hers re-  
 plies, —

He saw sometimes : or Margaret mourn-  
 fully

Gazed on him full of doubt, as one who  
 tries

To crush belief that does love injury ;  
 Then she would wring her hands, but  
 soon again

Love's patience glimmered out through  
 cloudy pain.

## XXVI.

Meanwhile he dared not go and steal away  
 The silent, dead-cold witness of his sin :

He had not feared the life, but that dull  
 clay,

Those open eyes that showed the death  
 within,

Would surely stare him mad ; yet all the  
 day

A dreadful impulse, whence his will  
 could win

No refuge, made him linger in the aisle,  
 Freezing with his wan look each greeting  
 smile.



## XXVII.

Now, on the second day there was to be  
 A festival in church: from far and near  
 Came flocking in the sunburnt peasantry,  
 And knights and dames with stately  
 antique cheer,  
 Blazing with pomp, as if all faërie  
 Had emptied her quaint halls, or, as  
 it were,  
 The illuminated marge of some old book,  
 While we were gazing, life and motion  
 took.

## XXVIII.

When all were entered, and the roving  
 eyes  
 Of all were stayed, some upon faces  
 bright,  
 Some on the priests, some on the traceries  
 That decked the slumber of a marble  
 knight,  
 And all the rustlings over that arise  
 From recognizing tokens of delight,  
 When friendly glances meet,—then silent  
 ease  
 Spread o'er the multitude by slow de-  
 grees.

## XXIX.

Then swelled the organ: up through  
 choir and nave  
 The music trembled with an inward  
 thrill  
 Of bliss at its own grandeur: wave on  
 wave  
 Its flood of mellow thunder rose, un-  
 til  
 The hushed air shivered with the throb  
 it gave,  
 Then, poising for a moment, it stood  
 still,  
 And sank and rose again, to burst in  
 spray  
 That wandered into silence far away.

## XXX.

Like to a mighty heart the music seemed,  
 That yearns with melodies it cannot  
 speak,  
 Until, in grand despair of what it  
 dreamed,  
 In the agony of effort it doth break,  
 Yet triumphs breaking; on it rushed and  
 streamed  
 And wanted in its might, as when  
 a lake,

Long pent among the mountains, bursts  
 its walls  
 And in one crowding gush leaps forth  
 and falls.

## XXXI.

Deeper and deeper shudders shook the  
 air,  
 As the huge bass kept gathering heav-  
 ily,  
 Like thunder when it rouses in its lair,  
 And with its hoarse growl shakes the  
 low-hung sky,  
 It grew up like a darkness everywhere,  
 Filling the vast cathedral;—suddenly,  
 From the dense mass a boy's clear treble  
 broke  
 Like lightning, and the full-toned choir  
 awoke.

## XXXII.

Through gorgeous windows shone the  
 sun aslant,  
 Brimming the church with gold and  
 purple mist,  
 Meet atmosphere to bosom that rich  
 chant,  
 Where fifty voices in one strand did  
 twist,  
 Their varicolored tones, and left no want  
 To the delighted soul, which sank  
 abysed  
 In the warm music cloud, while, far be-  
 low,  
 The organ heaved its surges to and fro.

## XXXIII.

As if a lark should suddenly drop dead  
 While the blue air yet trembled with  
 its song,  
 So snapped at once that music's golden  
 thread,  
 Struck by a nameless fear that leapt  
 along  
 From heart to heart, and like a shadow  
 spread  
 With instantaneous shiver through the  
 throng,  
 So that some glanced behind, as half  
 aware  
 A hideous shape of dread were standing  
 there.

## XXXIV.

As when a crowd of pale men gather  
 round,  
 Watching an eddy in the leader deep,



From which they deem the body of one  
drowned

Will be cast forth, from face to face  
doth creep

An eager dread that holds all tongues  
fast bound

Until the horror, with a ghastly leap,  
Starts up, its dead blue arms stretched  
aimlessly,

Heaved with the swinging of the care-  
less sea, —

## XXXV.

So in the faces of all these there grew,  
As by one impulse, a dark, freezing  
awe,

Which, with a fearful fascination drew  
All eyes toward the altar; damp and  
raw

The air grew suddenly, and no man knew  
Whether perchance his silent neighbor  
saw

The dreadful thing which all were sure  
would rise

To scare the strained lids wider from  
their eyes.

## XXXVI.

The incense trembled as it upward sent  
Its slow, uncertain thread of wander-  
ing blue,

As 't were the only living element  
In all the church, so deep the stillness  
grew;

It seemed one might have heard it, as it  
went,

Give out an audible rustle, curling  
through

The midnight silence of that awe-struck  
air,

More hushed than death, though so  
much life was there.

## XXXVII.

Nothing they saw, but a low voice was  
heard

Threading the ominous silence of that  
fear,

Gentle and terrorless as if a bird,  
Wakened by some volcano's glare,  
should cheer

The murky air with his song; yet every  
word

In the cathedral's farthest arch seemed  
near,

As if it spoke to every one apart,  
Like the clear voice of conscience in each  
heart.

## XXXVIII.

"O Rest, to weary hearts thou art most  
dear!

O Silence, after life's bewildering din,  
Thou art most welcome, whether in the  
sear

Days of our age thou comest, or we  
win

Thy poppy-wreath in youth! then where-  
fore here

Linger I yet, once free to enter in  
At that wished gate which gentle Death  
doth ope,

Into the boundless realm of strength and  
hope?

## XXXIX.

"Think not in death my love could ever  
cease;

If thou wast false, more need there is  
for me

Still to be true; that slumber were not  
peace,

If 't were unvisited with dreams of  
thee:

And thou hadst never heard such words  
as these,

Save that in heaven I must forever be  
Most comfortless and wretched, seeing  
this

Our unbaptized babe shut out from bliss.

## XL.

"This little spirit with imploring eyes  
Wanders alone the dreary wild of  
space;

The shadow of his pain forever lies  
Upon my soul in this new dwelling-  
place;

His loneliness makes me in Paradise  
More lonely, and, unless I see his face,  
Even here for grief could I lie down and  
die,

Save for my curse of immortality.

## XLI.

"World after world he sees around him  
swim

Crowded with happy souls, that take  
no heed

Of the sad eyes that from the night's  
faint rim

Gaze sick with longing on them as  
they speed

With golden gates, that only shut on  
him;

And shapes sometimes from Hell's  
abysses freed  
Flap darkly by him, with enormous  
sweep  
Of wings that roughen wide the pitchy  
deep.

## XLII.

"I am a mother, — spirits do not shake  
This much of earth from them, — and  
I must pine  
Till I can feel his little hands, and take  
His weary head upon this heart of  
mine;  
And, might it be, full gladly for his  
sake

Would I this solitude of bliss resign,  
And be shut out of Heaven to dwell with  
him  
Forever in that silence drear and dim.

## XLIII.

"I strove to hush my soul, and would  
not speak  
At first, for thy dear sake; a woman's  
love  
Is mighty, but a mother's heart is weak,  
And by its weakness overcomes; I  
strove  
To smother bitter thoughts with patience  
meek,  
But still in the abyss my soul would  
rove,  
Seeking my child, and drove me here to  
claim  
The rite that gives him peace in Christ's  
dear name.

## XLIV.

"I sit and weep while blessed spirits  
sing;  
I can but long and pine the while they  
praise,  
And, leaning o'er the wall of Heaven, I  
fling  
My voice to where I deem my infant  
strays,  
Like a robbed bird that cries in vain to  
bring  
Her nestlings back beneath her wings'  
embrace;  
But still he answers not, and I but know  
That Heaven and earth are both alike in  
woe."

## XLV.

Then the pale priests, with ceremony due,  
Baptized the child within its dreadful  
tomb  
Beneath that mother's heart, whose in-  
stinct true  
Star-like had battled down the triple  
gloom  
Of sorrow, love, and death: young maid-  
ens, too,  
Strewed the pale corpse with many a  
milkwhite bloom,  
And parted the bright hair, and on the  
breast  
Crossed the unconscious hands in sign  
of rest.

## XLVI.

Some said, that, when the priest had  
sprinkled o'er  
The consecrated drops, they seemed to  
hear  
A sigh, as of some heart from travail  
sore  
Released, and then two voices singing  
clear,  
*Misereatur Deus*, more and more  
Fading far upward, and their ghastly  
fear  
Fell from them with that sound, as  
bodies fall  
From souls upspringing to celestial hall.

## PROMETHEUS.

ONE after one the stars have risen and  
set,  
Sparkling upon the hoarfrost on my  
chain:  
The Bear, that prowled all night about the  
fold  
Of the North-star, hath shrunk into his  
den,  
Scared by the blithesome footsteps of the  
Dawn,  
Whose blushing smile floods all the  
Orient;  
And now bright Lucifer grows less and  
less,  
Into the heaven's blue quiet deep-with-  
drawn.  
Sunless and starless all, the desert sky  
Arches above me, empty as this heart  
For ages hath been empty of all joy,  
Except to brood upon its silent hope,  
As o'er its hope of day the sky doth now.

All night have I heard voices : deeper yet  
 The deep low breathing of the silence  
     grew,  
 While all about, muffled in awe, there  
     stood  
 Shadows, or forms, or both, clear-felt at  
     heart,  
 But, when I turned to front them, far  
     along  
 Only a shudder through the midnight ran,  
 And the dense stillness walled me closer  
     round.  
 But still I heard them wander up and  
     down  
 That solitude, and flappings of dusk  
     wings  
 Did mingle with them, whether of those  
     hags  
 Let slip upon me once from Hades deep,  
 Or of yet direr torments, if such be,  
 I could but guess ; and then toward me  
     came  
 A shape as of a woman : very pale  
 It was, and calm ; its cold eyes did not  
     move,  
 And mine moved not, but only stared on  
     them.  
 Their fixed awe went through my brain  
     like ice ;  
 A skeleton hand seemed clutching at my  
     heart,  
 And a sharp chill, as if a dank night fog  
 Suddenly closed me in, was all I felt :  
 And then, methought, I heard a freezing  
     sigh,  
 A long, deep, shivering sigh, as from blue  
     lips  
 Stiffening in death, close to mine ear. I  
     thought  
 Some doom was close upon me, and I  
     looked  
 And saw the red moon through the heavy  
     mist,  
 Just setting, and it seemed as it were  
     falling,  
 Or reeling to its fall, so dim and dead  
 And palsy-struck it looked. Then all  
     sounds merged  
 Into the rising surges of the pines,  
 Which, leagues below me, clothing the  
     gaunt loins  
 Of ancient Caucasus with hairy strength,  
 Sent up a murmur in the morning wind,  
 Sad as the wail that from the populous  
     earth  
 All day and night to high Olympus soars,  
 Fit incense to thy wicked throne, O Jove !

Thy hated name is tossed once more in  
     scorn  
 From off my lips, for I will tell thy doom.  
 And are these tears ? Nay, do not tri-  
     umph, Jove !  
 They are wrung from me but by the ago-  
     nies  
 Of prophecy, like those sparse drops  
     which fall  
 From clouds in travail of the lightning,  
     when  
 The great wave of the storm high-curved  
     and black  
 Rolls steadily onward to its thunderous  
     break.  
 Why art thou made a god of, thou poor  
     type  
 Of anger, and revenge, and cunning force ?  
 True Power was never born of brutish  
     Strength,  
 Nor sweet Truth suckled at the shaggy  
     dugs  
 Of that old she-wolf. Are thy thunder-  
     bolts,  
 That quell the darkness for a space, so  
     strong  
 As the prevailing patience of meek Light,  
 Who, with the invincible tenderness of  
     peace,  
 Wins it to be a portion of herself ?  
 Why art thou made a god of, thou, who  
     hast  
 The never-sleeping terror at thy heart,  
 That birthright of all tyrants, worse to  
     bear  
 Than this thy ravening bird on which I  
     smile ?  
 Thou swear'st to free me, if I will unfold  
 What kind of doom it is whose omen flits  
 Across thy heart, as o'er a troop of doves  
 The fearful shadow of the kite. What  
     need  
 To know that truth whose knowledge  
     cannot save ?  
 Evil its errand hath, as well as Good ;  
 When thine is finished, thou art known  
     no more :  
 There is a higher purity than thou,  
 And higher purity is greater strength ;  
 Thy nature is thy doom, at which thy  
     heart  
 Trembles behind the thick wall of thy  
     might.  
 Let man but hope, and thou art straight-  
     way chilled  
 With thought of that drear silence and  
     deep night



Which, like a dream, shall swallow thee  
and thine :

Let man but will, and thou art god no  
more,

More capable of ruin than the gold  
And ivory that image thee on earth.

He who hurled down the monstrous  
Titan-brood

Blinded with lightnings, with rough  
thunders stunned,

Is weaker than a simple human thought.

My slender voice can shake thee, as the  
breeze,

That seems but apt to stir a maiden's hair,  
Sways huge Oceanus from pole to pole ;

For I am still Prometheus, and foreknow  
In my wise heart the end and doom of all.

Yes, I am still Prometheus, wiser grown  
By years of solitude, — that holds apart  
The past and future, giving the soul room  
To search into itself, — and long com-  
mune

With this eternal silence ; — more a god,  
In my long-suffering and strength to meet  
With equal front the direst shafts of fate,  
Than thou in thy faint-hearted despot-  
ism,

Girt with thy baby-toys of force and  
wrath.

Yes, I am that Prometheus who brought  
down

The light to man, which thou, in selfish  
fear,

Hadst to thyself usurped, — his by sole  
right,

For Man hath right to all save Tyr-  
anny, —

And which shall free him yet from thy  
frail throne.

Tyrants are but the spawn of Ignorance,  
Begotten by the slaves they trample on,  
Who, could they win a glimmer of the  
light,

And see that Tyranny is always weak-  
ness,

Or Fear with its own bosom ill at ease,  
Would laugh away in scorn the sand-  
wove chain

Which their own blindness feigned for  
adamant.

Wrong ever builds on quicksands, but  
the Right

To the firm centre lays its moveless base.  
The tyrant trembles, if the air but stir

The innocent ringlets of a child's free  
hair,

And crouches, when the thought of some  
great spirit,

With world-wide murmur, like a rising  
gale,

Over men's hearts, as over standing corn,  
Rushes, and bends them to its own strong  
will.

So shall some thought of mine yet circle  
earth,

And puff away thy crumbling altars,  
Jove !

And, wouldst thou know of my su-  
preme revenge,

Poor tyrant, even now dethroned in  
heart,

Realmless in soul, as tyrants ever are,  
Listen ! and tell me if this bitter peak,  
This never-glutted vulture, and these  
chains

Shrink not before it ; for it shall befit  
A sorrow-taught, unconquered Titan-  
heart.

Men, when their death is on them, seem  
to stand

On a precipitous crag that overhangs  
The abyss of doom, and in that depth  
to see,

As in a glass, the features dim and vast  
Of things to come, the shadows, as it  
seems,

Of what have been. Death ever fronts  
the wise ;

Not fearfully, but with clear promises  
Of larger life, on whose broad vans up-  
borne,

Their outlook widens, and they see be-  
yond

The horizon of the Present and the Past,  
Even to the very source and end of  
things.

Such am I now : immortal woe hath  
made

My heart a seer, and my soul a judge  
Between the substance and the shadow  
of Truth.

The sure supremacy of the Beautiful,  
By all the martyrdoms made doubly sure  
Of such as I am, this is my revenge,  
Which of my wrongs builds a triumphal  
arch.

Through which I see a sceptre and a  
throne.

The pipings of glad shepherds on the  
hills,

Tending the flocks no more to bleed for  
thee, —



The songs of maidens pressing with white feet  
 The vintage on thine altars poured no more, —  
 The murmurous bliss of lovers, underneath  
 Dim grapevine bowers, whose rosy bunches press  
 Not half so closely their warm cheeks, unpaled  
 By thoughts of thy brute lust, — the hive-like hum  
 Of peaceful commonwealths, where sun-burnt Toil  
 Reaps for itself the rich earth made its own  
 By its own labor, lightened with glad hymns  
 To an omnipotence which thy mad bolts  
 Would cope with as a spark with the vast sea, —  
 Even the spirit of free love and peace,  
 Duty's sure recompense through life and death, —  
 These are such harvests as all master-spirits  
 Reap, haply not on earth, but reap no less  
 Because the sheaves are bound by hands not theirs;  
 These are the bloodless daggers wherewithal  
 They stab fallen tyrants, this their high revenge:  
 For their best part of life on earth is when,  
 Long after death, prisoned and pent no more,  
 Their thoughts, their wild dreams even, have become  
 Part of the necessary air men breathe:  
 When, like the moon, herself behind a cloud,  
 They shed down light before us on life's sea,  
 That cheers us to steer onward still in hope.  
 Earth with her twining memories ivies o'er  
 Their holy sepulchres; the chainless sea,  
 In tempest or wide calm, repeats their thoughts;  
 The lightning and the thunder, all free things,  
 Have legends of them for the ears of men.  
 All other glories are as falling stars,

But universal Nature watches theirs:  
 Such strength is won by love of human kind.

Not that I feel that hunger after fame,  
 Which souls of a half-greatness are beset with;

But that the memory of noble deeds  
 Cries shame upon the idle and the vile,  
 And keeps the heart of Man forever up  
 To the heroic level of old time.

To be forgot at first is little pain  
 To a heart conscious of such high intent  
 As must be deathless on the lips of men;  
 But, having been a name, to sink and be  
 A something which the world can do

without,  
 Which, having been or not, would never change

The lightest pulse of fate, — this is indeed

A cup of bitterness the worst to taste,  
 And this thy heart shall empty to the dregs.

Endless despair shall be thy Caucasus,  
 And memory thy vulture; thou wilt find  
 Oblivion far lonelier than this peak.

Behold thy destiny! Thou think'st it much

That I should brave thee, miserable god!  
 But I have braved a mightier than thou,  
 Even the tempting of this soaring heart,  
 Which might have made me, scarcely less than thou,

A god among my brethren weak and blind,

Scarce less than thou, a pitiable thing  
 To be down-trodden into darkness soon.

But now I am above thee, for thou art  
 The bungling workmanship of fear, the block

That awes the swart Barbarian; but I  
 Am what myself have made, — a nature wise

With finding in itself the types of all,  
 With watching from the dim verge of the time

What things to be are visible in the gleams

Thrown forward on them from the luminous past,

Wise with the history of its own frail heart,

With reverence and with sorrow, and with love,

Broad as the world, for freedom and for man.

Thou and all strength shall crumble,  
 except Love,  
 By whom, and for whose glory, ye shall  
 cease :  
 And, when thou 'rt but a weary moaning  
 heard  
 From out the pitiless gloom of Chaos, I  
 Shall be a power and a memory,  
 A name to fright all tyrants with, a  
 light  
 Unsetting as the pole-star, a great voice  
 Heard in the breathless pauses of the  
 fight  
 By truth and freedom ever waged with  
 wrong,  
 Clear as a silver trumpet, to awake  
 Far echoes that from age to age live  
 on  
 In kindred spirits, giving them a sense  
 Of boundless power from boundless suf-  
 fering wrung :  
 And many a glazing eye shall smile to  
 see  
 The memory of my triumph (for to meet  
 Wrong with endurance, and to overcome  
 The present with a heart that looks be-  
 yond,  
 Are triumph), like a prophet eagle, perch  
 Upon the sacred banner of the Right.  
 Evil springs up, and flowers, and bears  
 no seed,  
 And feeds the green earth with its swift  
 decay,  
 Leaving it richer for the growth of  
 truth ;  
 But Good, once put in action or in  
 thought,  
 Like a strong oak, doth from its boughs  
 shed down  
 The ripe germs of a forest. Thou, weak  
 god,  
 Shalt fade and be forgotten ! but this  
 soul,  
 Fresh-living still in the serene abyss,  
 In every heaving shall partake, that  
 grows  
 From heart to heart among the sons of  
 men, —  
 As the ominous hum before the earth-  
 quake runs  
 Far through the Ægean from roused isle  
 to isle, —  
 Foreboding wreck to palaces and shrines,  
 And mighty rents in many a cavernous  
 error  
 That darkens the free light to man : —  
 This heart,

Unscarred by thy grim vulture, as the  
 truth  
 Grows but more lovely 'neath the beaks  
 and claws  
 Of Harpies blind that fain would soil it,  
 shall  
 In all the throbbing exultations share  
 That wait on freedom's triumphs, and  
 in all  
 The glorious agonies of martyr-spirits,  
 Sharp lightning-throes to split the jag-  
 ged clouds  
 That veil the future, showing them the  
 end,  
 Pain's thorny crown for constancy and  
 truth,  
 Girding the temples like a wreath of  
 stars.  
 This is a thought, that, like the fabled  
 laurel,  
 Makes my faith thunder-proof ; and thy  
 dread bolts  
 Fall on me like the silent flakes of snow  
 On the hoar brows of aged Caucasus :  
 But, oh, thought far more blissful, they  
 can rend  
 This cloud of flesh, and make my soul a  
 star !  
 Unleash thy crouching thunders now,  
 O Jove !  
 Free this high heart, which, a poor cap-  
 tive long,  
 Doth knock to be let forth, this heart  
 which still,  
 In its invincible manhood, overtops  
 Thy puny godship, as this mountain doth  
 The pines that moss its roots. O, even  
 now,  
 While from my peak of suffering I look  
 down,  
 Beholding with a far-spread gush of  
 hope  
 The sunrise of that Beauty, in whose  
 face,  
 Shone all around with love, no man shall  
 look  
 But straightway like a god he be uplift  
 Unto the throne long empty for his sake,  
 And clearly oft foreshadowed in brave  
 dreams  
 By his free inward nature, which nor  
 thou,  
 Nor any anarchy after thee, can bind  
 From working its great doom, — now,  
 now set free  
 This essence, not to die, but to become

Part of that awful Presence which doth  
haunt

The palaces of tyrants, to scare off,  
With its grim eyes and fearful whisper-  
ings

And hideous sense of utter loneliness,  
All hope of safety, all desire of peace,  
All but the loathed forefeeling of blank  
death,—

Part of that spirit which doth ever brood  
In patient calm on the unpilfered nest  
Of man's deep heart, till mighty thoughts  
grow fledged

To sail with darkening shadow o'er the  
world,

Filling with dread such souls as dare not  
trust

In the unfailling energy of Good,  
Until they swoop, and their pale quarry  
make

Of some o'erbloated wrong,—that spirit  
which

Scatters great hopes in the seed-field of  
man,

Like acorns among grain, to grow and be  
A roof for freedom in all coming time!

But no, this cannot be; for ages yet,  
In solitude unbroken, shall I hear  
The angry Caspian to the Euxine shout,  
And Euxine answer with a muffled roar,  
On either side storming the giant walls  
Of Caucasus with leagues of climbing  
foam

(Less, from my height, than flakes of  
downy snow),

That draw back baffled but to hurl again,  
Snatched up in wrath and horrible tur-  
moil,

Mountain on mountain, as the Titans  
erst,

My brethren, scaling the high seat of  
Jove,

Heaved Pelion upon Ossa's shoulders  
broad

In vain emprise. The moon will come  
and go

With her monotonous vicissitude;  
Once beautiful, when I was free to walk  
Among my fellows, and to interchange  
The influence benign of loving eyes,  
But now by aged use grown wearisome;—  
False thought! most false! for how could  
I endure

These crawling centuries of lonely woe  
Unshamed by weak complaining, but for  
thee,

Loneliest, save me, of all created things,  
Mild-eyed Astarte, my best comforter,  
With thy pale smile of sad benignity!

Year after year will pass away and  
seem

To me, in mine eternal agony,  
But as the shadows of dumb summer  
clouds,

Which I have watched so often darken-  
ing o'er

The vast Sarmatian plain, league-wide  
at first,

But, with still swiftmess, lessening on  
and on

Till cloud and shadow meet and mingle  
where

The gray horizon fades into the sky,  
Far, far to northward. Yes, for ages yet  
Must I lie here upon my altar huge,

A sacrifice for man. Sorrow will be,  
As it hath been, his portion; endless  
doom,

While the immortal with the mortal  
linked

Dreams of its wings and pines for what  
it dreams,

With upward yearn unceasing. Better  
so:

For wisdom is stern sorrow's patient  
child,

And empire over self, and all the deep  
Strong charities that make men seem  
like gods;

And love, that makes them be gods,  
from her breasts

Sucks in the milk that makes mankind  
one blood.

Good never comes unmixed, or so it  
seems,

Having two faces, as some images  
Are carved, of foolish gods; one face  
is ill;

But one heart lies beneath, and that is  
good,

As are all hearts, when we explore their  
depths.

Therefore, great heart, bear up! thou art  
but type

Of what all lofty spirits endure, that fain  
Would win men back to strength and  
peace through love:

Each hath his lonely peak, and on each  
heart

Envy, or scorn, or hatred, tears lifelong  
With vulture beak; yet the high soul is  
left;



And faith, which is but hope grown  
wise, and love  
And patience which at last shall over-  
come.

#### THE SHEPHERD OF KING ADMETUS.

THERE came a youth upon the earth,  
Some thousand years ago,  
Whose slender hands were nothing  
worth,  
Whether to plough, or reap, or sow.

Upon an empty tortoise-shell  
He stretched some chords, and drew  
Music that made men's bosoms swell  
Fearless, or brimmed their eyes with  
dew.

Then King Admetus, one who had  
Pure taste by right divine,  
Decreed his singing not too bad  
To hear between the cups of wine :

And so, well pleased with being soothed  
Into a sweet half-sleep,  
Three times his kingly beard he smoothed,  
And made him viceroy o'er his sheep.

His words were simple words enough,  
And yet he used them so,  
That what in other mouths was rough  
In his seemed musical and low.

Men called him but a shiftless youth,  
In whom no good they saw ;  
And yet, unwittingly, in truth,  
They made his careless words their law.

They knew not how he learned at all,  
For idly, hour by hour,  
He sat and watched the dead leaves fall,  
Or mused upon a common flower.

It seemed the loveliness of things  
Did teach him all their use,  
For, in mere weeds, and stones, and  
springs,  
He found a healing power profuse.

Men granted that his speech was wise,  
But, when a glance they caught  
Of his slim grace and woman's eyes,  
They laughed, and called him good-for-  
naught.

Yet after he was dead and gone,  
And e'en his memory dim,

Earth seemed more sweet to live upon,  
More full of love, because of him.

And day by day more holy grew  
Each spot where he had trod,  
Till after-poets only knew  
Their first-born brother as a god.

#### THE TOKEN.

It is a mere wild rosebud,  
Quite sallow now, and dry,  
Yet there's something wondrous in it,  
Some gleams of days gone by,  
Dear sights and sounds that are to me  
The very moons of memory,  
And stir my heart's blood far below  
Its short-lived waves of joy and woe.

Lips must fade and roses wither,  
All sweet times be o'er ;  
They only smile, and, murmuring  
"Thither!"

Stay with us no more :  
And yet ofttimes a look or smile,  
Forgotten in a kiss's while,  
Years after from the dark will start,  
And flash across the trembling heart.

Thou hast given me many roses,  
But never one, like this,  
O'erfloods both sense and spirit  
With such a deep, wild bliss ;  
We must have instincts that glean up  
Sparse drops of this life in the cup,  
Whose taste shall give us all that we  
Can prove of immortality.

Earth's stablest things are shadows,  
And, in the life to come,  
Haply some chance-saved trifle  
May tell of this old home :  
As now sometimes we seem to find,  
In a dark crevice of the mind,  
Some relic, which, long pondered o'er,  
Hints faintly at a life before.

#### AN INCIDENT IN A RAILROAD CAR.

HE spoke of Burns: men rude and  
rough  
Pressed round to hear the praise of one  
Whose heart was made of manly, simple  
stuff,  
As homespun as their own.



And, when he read, they forward  
leaned,

Drinking, with thirsty hearts and ears,  
His brook-like songs whom glory never  
weaned

From humble smiles and tears.

Slowly there grew a tender awe,  
Sun-like, o'er faces brown and hard,  
As if in him who read they felt and saw  
Some presence of the bard.

It was a sight for sin and wrong  
And slavish tyranny to see,  
A sight to make our faith more pure and  
strong  
In high humanity.

I thought, these men will carry hence  
Promptings their former life above,  
And something of a finer reverence  
For beauty, truth, and love.

God scatters love on every side  
Freely among his children all,  
And always hearts are lying open wide,  
Wherein some grains may fall.

There is no wind but soweth seeds  
Of a more true and open life,  
Which burst, unlooked for, into high-  
souled deeds,  
With wayside beauty rife.

We find within these souls of ours  
Some wild germs of a higher birth,  
Which in the poet's tropic heart bear  
flowers  
Whose fragrance fills the earth.

Within the hearts of all men lie  
These promises of wider bliss,  
Which blossom into hopes that cannot  
die,  
In sunny hours like this.

All that hath been majestical  
In life or death, since time began,  
Is native in the simple heart of all,  
The angel heart of man.

And thus, among the untaught poor,  
Great deeds and feelings find a home,  
That cast in shadow all the golden lore  
Of classic Greece and Rome.

O, mighty brother-soul of man,  
Where'er thou art, in low or high,

Thy skyey arches with exulting span  
O'er-roof infinity !

All thoughts that mould the age begin  
Deep down within the primitive soul,  
And from the many slowly upward win  
To one who grasps the whole :

In his wide brain the feeling deep  
That struggled on the many's tongue  
Swells to a tide of thought, whose surges  
leap  
O'er the weak thrones of wrong.

All thought begins in feeling, — wide  
In the great mass its base is hid,  
And, narrowing up to thought, stands  
glorified,  
A moveless pyramid.

Nor is he far astray, who deems  
That every hope, which rises and  
grows broad  
In the world's heart, by ordered impulse  
streams  
From the great heart of God.

God wills, man hopes : in common  
souls  
Hope is but vague and undefined,  
Till from the poet's tongue the message  
rolls  
A blessing to his kind.

Never did Poesy appear  
So full of heaven to me, as when  
I saw how it would pierce through pride  
and fear  
To the lives of coarsest men.

It may be glorious to write  
Thoughts that shall glad the two or  
three  
High souls, like those far stars that  
come in sight  
Once in a century ; —

But better far it is to speak  
One simple word, which now and then  
Shall waken their free nature in the  
weak  
And friendless sons of men ;

To write some earnest verse or line,  
Which, seeking not the praise of art,  
Shall make a clearer faith and manhood  
shine  
In the untutored heart.

He who doth this, in verse or prose,  
 May be forgotten in his day,  
 But surely shall be crowned at last with  
 those  
 Who live and speak for aye.

## RHÆCUS.

God sends his teachers unto every age,  
 To every clime, and every race of men,  
 With revelations fitted to their growth  
 And shape of mind, nor gives the realm  
 of Truth

Into the selfish rule of one sole race:  
 Therefore each form of worship that hath  
 swayed

The life of man, and given it to grasp  
 The master-key of knowledge, rever-  
 ence,

Infolds some germs of goodness and of  
 right;

Else never had the eager soul, which  
 loathes

The slothful down of pampered igno-  
 rance,

Found in it even a moment's fitful rest.

There is an instinct in the human  
 heart

Which makes that all the fables it hath  
 coined,

To justify the reign of its belief  
 And strengthen it by beauty's right  
 divine,

Veil in their inner cells a mystic gift,  
 Which, like the hazel twig, in faithful  
 hands,

Points surely to the hidden springs of  
 truth.

For, as in nature naught is made in vain,  
 But all things have within their hull of  
 use

A wisdom and a meaning which may  
 speak

Of spiritual secrets to the ear  
 Of spirit; so, in whatsoe'er the heart  
 Hath fashioned for a solace to itself,  
 To make its inspirations suit its creed,  
 And from the niggard hands of falsehood  
 wring

Its needful food of truth, there ever is  
 A sympathy with Nature, which reveals,  
 Not less than her own works, pure  
 gleams of light

And earnest parables of inward lore.  
 Hear now this fairy legend of old Greece,

As full of gracious youth and beauty  
 still

As the immortal freshness of that grace  
 Carved for all ages on some Attic frieze.

A youth named Rhœcus, wandering in  
 the wood,

Saw an old oak just trembling to its fall,  
 And, feeling pity of so fair a tree,

He propped its gray trunk with admir-  
 ing care,

And with a thoughtless footstep loitered  
 on.

But, as he turned, he heard a voice be-  
 hind

That murmured "Rhœcus!" 'T was as  
 if the leaves,

Stirred by a passing breath, had mur-  
 mured it,

And, while he paused bewildered, yet  
 again

It murmured "Rhœcus!" softer than a  
 breeze.

He started and beheld with dizzy eyes  
 What seemed the substance of a happy  
 dream

Stand there before him, spreading a warm  
 glow

Within the green glooms of the shadowy  
 oak.

It seemed a woman's shape, yet far too  
 fair

To be a woman, and with eyes too meek  
 For any that were wont to mate with  
 gods.

All naked like a goddess stood she there,  
 And like a goddess all too beautiful  
 To feel the guilt-born earthliness of  
 shame.

"Rhœcus, I am the Dryad of this tree,"  
 Thus she began, dropping her low-toned  
 words

Serene, and full, and clear, as drops of  
 dew,

"And with it I am doomed to live and  
 die;

The rain and sunshine are my caterers,  
 Nor have I other bliss than simple life:  
 Now ask me what thou wilt, that I can  
 give,

And with a thankful joy it shall be  
 thine."

Then Rhœcus, with a flutter at the  
 heart,

Yet, by the prompting of such beauty,  
 bold,

Answered: "What is there that can satisfy  
The endless craving of the soul but love?  
Give me thy love, or but the hope of that  
Which must be evermore my nature's goal."

After a little pause she said again,  
But with a glimpse of sadness in her tone,

"I give it, Rhœcus, though a perilous gift;

An hour before the sunset meet me here."  
And straightway there was nothing he could see

But the green glooms beneath the shadowy oak,

And not a sound came to his straining ears

But the low trickling rustle of the leaves,  
And far away upon an emerald slope  
The falter of an idle shepherd's pipe.

Now, in those days of simpleness and faith,

Men did not think that happy things were dreams

Because they overstepped the narrow bourn

Of likelihood, but reverently deemed

Nothing too wondrous or too beautiful  
To be the guerdon of a daring heart.

So Rhœcus made no doubt that he was blest,

And all along unto the city's gate  
Earth seemed to spring beneath him as he walked,

The clear, broad sky looked bluer than its wont,

And he could scarce believe he had not wings,

Such sunshine seemed to glitter through his veins

Instead of blood, so light he felt and strange.

Young Rhœcus had a faithful heart enough,

But one that in the present dwelt too much,

And, taking with blithe welcome whatsoever

Chance gave of joy, was wholly bound in that,

Like the contented peasant of a vale,  
Deemed it the world, and never looked beyond.

So, haply meeting in the afternoon

Some comrades who were playing at the dice,  
He joined them, and forgot all else beside.

The dice were rattling at the merriest,

And Rhœcus, who had met but sorry luck,

Just laughed in triumph at a happy throw,

When through the room there hummed a yellow bee

That buzzed about his ear with down-dropped legs

As if to light. And Rhœcus laughed and said,

Feeling how red and flushed he was with loss,

"By Venus! does he take me for a rose?"

And brushed him off with rough, impatient hand.

But still the bee came back, and thrice again

Rhœcus did beat him off with growing wrath.

Then through the window flew the wounded bee,

And Rhœcus, tracking him with angry eyes,

Saw a sharp mountain-peak of Thessaly  
Against the red disk of the setting sun,—

And instantly the blood sank from his heart,

As if its very walls had caved away.  
Without a word he turned, and, rushing forth,

Ran madly through the city and the gate,  
And o'er the plain, which now the wood's long shade,

By the low sun thrown forward broad and dim,

Darkened wellnigh unto the city's wall.

Quite spent and out of breath he reached the tree,

And, listening fearfully, he heard once more

The low voice murmur "Rhœcus!" close at hand:

Whereat he looked around him, but could see

Naught but the deepening glooms beneath the oak.

Then sighed the voice, "O Rhœcus! nevermore



Shalt thou behold me or by day or night,  
Me, who would fain have blessed thee  
with a love

More ripe and bounteous than ever yet  
Filled up with nectar any mortal heart:  
But thou didst scorn my humble mes-  
senger,  
And sent'st him back to me with bruised  
wings.

We spirits only show to gentle eyes,  
We ever ask an undivided love,  
And he who scorns the least of Nature's  
works

Is thenceforth exiled and shut out from  
all.

Farewell! for thou canst never see me  
more."

Then Rhœus beat his breast, and  
groaned aloud,  
And cried, "Be pitiful! forgive me yet  
This once, and I shall never need it  
more!"

"Alas!" the voice returned, "'t is thou  
art blind,

Not I unmerciful; I can forgive,  
But have no skill to heal thy spirit's  
eyes;

Only the soul hath power o'er itself."  
With that again there murmured "Never-  
ermore!"

And Rhœus after heard no other sound,  
Except the rattling of the oak's crisp  
leaves,

Like the long surf upon a distant shore,  
Raking the sea-worn pebbles up and  
down.

The night had gathered round him: o'er  
the plain

The city sparkled with its thousand  
lights,

And sounds of revel fell upon his ear  
Harshly and like a curse; above, the sky,  
With all its bright sublimity of stars,  
Deepened, and on his forehead smote the  
breeze:

Beauty was all around him and de-  
light,

But from that eve he was alone on earth.

#### THE FALCON.

I KNOW a falcon swift and peerless  
As e'er was cradled in the pine;  
No bird had ever eye so fearless,  
Or wing so strong as this of mine.

The winds not better love to pilot  
A cloud with molten gold o'errun,  
Than him, a little burning islet,  
A star above the coming sun.

For with a lark's heart he doth tower,  
By a glorious upward instinct drawn;  
No bee nestles deeper in the flower  
Than he in the bursting rose of dawn.

No harmless dove, no bird that singeth,  
Shudders to see him overhead;  
The rush of his fierce swooping bringeth  
To innocent hearts no thrill of dread.

Let fraud and wrong and baseness shiver,  
For still between them and the sky  
The falcon Truth hangs poised forever  
And marks them with his vengeful eye.

#### TRIAL.

##### I.

WHETHER the idle prisoner through his  
grate

Watches the waving of the grass-tuft  
small,

Which, having colonized its rift i' th'  
wall,

Accepts God's dole of good or evil fate,  
And from the sky's just helmet draws its  
lot

Daily of shower or sunshine, cold or  
hot;—

Whether the closer captive of a creed,  
Cooped up from birth to grind out end-  
less chaff,

Sees through his treadmill-bars the noon-  
day laugh,

And feels in vain his crumpled pinions  
breed;—

Whether the Georgian slave look up and  
mark,

With belying sails puffed full, the tall  
cloud-bark

Sink northward slowly, — thou alone  
seem'st good,

Fair only thou, O Freedom, whose desire  
Can light in muddiest souls quick seeds  
of fire,

And strain life's chords to the old heroic  
mood.

##### II.

Yet are there other gifts more fair than  
thine,

Nor can I count him happiest who has  
never



Been forced with his own hand his chains  
to sever,  
And for himself find out the way divine;  
He never knew the aspirer's glorious  
pains,  
He never earned the struggle's priceless  
gains.  
O, block by block, with sore and sharp  
endeavor,  
Lifelong we build these human natures  
up  
Into a temple fit for Freedom's shrine,  
And Trial ever consecrates the cup  
Wherefrom we pour her sacrificial wine.

## A GLANCE BEHIND THE CURTAIN.

WE see but half the causes of our deeds,  
Seeking them wholly in the outer life,  
And heedless of the encircling spirit-  
world,  
Which, though unseen, is felt, and sows  
in us  
All germs of pure and world-wide pur-  
poses.  
From one stage of our being to the next  
We pass unconscious o'er a slender bridge,  
The momentary work of unseen hands,  
Which crumbles down behind us; look-  
ing back,  
We see the other shore, the gulf between,  
And, marvelling how we won to where  
we stand,  
Content ourselves to call the builder  
Chance.  
We trace the wisdom to the apple's fall,  
Not to the birth-throes of a mighty  
Truth  
Which, for long ages in blank Chaos  
dumb,  
Yet yearned to be incarnate, and had  
found  
At last a spirit meet to be the womb  
From which it might be born to bless  
mankind, —  
Not to the soul of Newton, ripe with all  
The hoarded thoughtfulness of earnest  
years,  
And waiting but one ray of sunlight  
more  
To blossom fully.

But whence came that ray?

We call our sorrows Destiny, but ought  
Rather to name our high successes so.  
Only the instincts of great souls are Fate,

And have predestined sway: all other  
things,  
Except by leave of us, could never be.  
For Destiny is but the breath of God  
Still moving in us, the last fragment left  
Of our unfallen nature, waking oft  
Within our thought, to beckon us be-  
yond  
The narrow circle of the seen and known,  
And always tending to a noble end,  
As all things must that overrule the soul,  
And for a space unseat the helmsman,  
Will.  
The fate of England and of freedom once  
Seemed wavering in the heart of one  
plain man:  
One step of his, and the great dial-hand,  
That marks the destined progress of the  
world  
In the eternal round from wisdom on  
To higher wisdom, had been made to  
pause  
A hundred years. That step he did not  
take, —  
He knew not why, nor we, but only  
God, —  
And lived to make his simple oaken chair  
More terrible and soberly august,  
More full of majesty than any throne,  
Before or after, of a British king.

Upon the pier stood two stern-visaged  
men,  
Looking to where a little craft lay  
moored,  
Swayed by the lazy current of the  
Thames,  
Which weltered by in muddy listlessness.  
Grave men they were, and battlings of  
fierce thought  
Had trampled out all softness from their  
brows,  
And ploughed rough furrows there before  
their time,  
For other crop than such as homebred  
Peace  
Sows broadcast in the willing soil of  
Youth.  
Care, not of self, but for the common-  
weal,  
Had robbed their eyes of youth, and left  
instead  
A look of patient power and iron will,  
And something fiercer, too, that gave  
broad hint  
Of the plain weapons girded at their  
sides.

The younger had an aspect of command, —  
 Not such as trickles down, a slender stream,  
 In the shrunk channel of a great descent,  
 But such as lies entowered in heart and head,  
 And an arm prompt to do the 'hests of both.  
 His was a brow where gold were out of place,  
 And yet it seemed right worthy of a crown  
 (Though he despised such), were it only made  
 Of iron, or some serviceable stuff  
 That would have matched his brownly rugged face.  
 The elder, although such he hardly seemed  
 (Care makes so little of some five short years),  
 Had a clear, honest face, whose rough-hewn strength  
 Was mildened by the scholar's wiser heart  
 To sober courage, such as best befits  
 The unsullied temper of a well-taught mind,  
 Yet so remained that one could plainly guess  
 The hushed volcano smouldering underneath.  
 He spoke: the other, hearing, kept his gaze  
 Still fixed, as on some problem in the sky.

“O CROMWELL, we are fallen on evil times!  
 There was a day when England had wide room  
 For honest men as well as foolish kings:  
 But now the uneasy stomach of the time  
 Turns squeamish at them both. Therefore let us  
 Seek out that savage clime, where men as yet  
 Are free: there sleeps the vessel on the tide,  
 Her languid canvas drooping for the wind;  
 Give us but that, and what need we to fear  
 This Order of the Council? The free waves

Will not say No to please a wayward king,  
 Nor will the winds turn traitors at his beck:  
 All things are fitly cared for, and the Lord  
 Will watch as kindly o'er the exodus  
 Of us his servants now, as in old time.  
 We have no cloud or fire, and haply we  
 May not pass dry-shod through the ocean-stream;  
 But, saved or lost, all things are in His hand.”  
 So spake he, and meantime the other stood  
 With wide gray eyes still reading the blank air,  
 As if upon the sky's blue wall he saw  
 Some mystic sentence, written by a hand,  
 Such as of old made pale the Assyrian king,  
 Girt with his satraps in the blazing feast.

“HAMPDEN! a moment since, my purpose was  
 To fly with thee,—for I will call it flight,  
 Nor flatter it with any smoother name,—  
 But something in me bids me not to go;  
 And I am one, thou knowest, who, unmoved  
 By what the weak deem omens, yet give heed  
 And reverence due to whatsoever my soul  
 Whispers of warning to the inner ear.  
 Moreover, as I know that God brings round  
 His purposes in ways undreamed by us,  
 And makes the wicked but his instruments  
 To hasten their own swift and sudden fall,  
 I see the beauty of his providence  
 In the King's order: blind, he will not let  
 His doom part from him, but must bid it stay  
 As 't were a cricket, whose enlivening chirp  
 He loved to hear beneath his very hearth.  
 Why should we fly? Nay, why not rather stay  
 And rear again our Zion's crumbled walls,  
 Not, as of old the walls of Thebes were built,  
 By minstrel twanging, but, if need should be,

With the more potent music of our  
swords?  
Think'st thou that score of men beyond  
the sea  
Claim more God's care than all of Eng-  
land here?  
No: when He moves His arm, it is to  
aid  
Whole peoples, heedless if a few be  
crushed,  
As some are ever, when the destiny  
Of man takes one stride onward nearer  
home.  
Believe me, 't is the mass of men He  
loves;  
And, where there is most sorrow and  
most want,  
Where the high heart of man is trodden  
down  
The most, 't is not because He hides His  
face  
From them in wrath, as purblind teach-  
ers prate:  
Not so: there most is He, for there is  
He  
Most needed. Men who seek for Fate  
abroad  
Are not so near His heart as they who  
dare  
Frankly to face her where she faces them,  
On their own threshold, where their souls  
are strong  
To grapple with and throw her; as I  
once,  
Being yet a boy, did cast this puny king,  
Who now has grown so dotard as to  
deem  
That he can wrestle with an angry realm,  
And throw the brawned Antæus of men's  
rights.  
No, Hampden! they have half-way con-  
quered Fate  
Who go half-way to meet her, — as  
will I.  
Freedom hath yet a work for me to do;  
So speaks that inward voice which never  
yet  
Spake falsely, when it urged the spirit on  
To noble emprise for country and man-  
kind.  
And, for success, I ask no more than  
this, —  
To bear unflinching witness to the truth.  
All true whole men succeed; for what is  
worth  
Success's name, unless it be the thought,  
The inward surety, to have carried out

A noble purpose to a noble end,  
Although it be the gallows or the block!  
'T is only Falsehood that doth ever need  
These outward shows of gain to bolster  
her.  
Be it we prove the weaker with our  
swords;  
Truth only needs to be for once spoke  
out,  
And there's such music in her, such  
strange rhythm,  
As makes men's memories her joyous  
slaves,  
And clings around the soul, as the sky  
clings  
Round the mute earth, forever beauti-  
ful,  
And, if o'erclouded, only to burst forth  
More all-embracingly divine and clear:  
Get but the truth once uttered, and 't is  
like  
A star new-born, that drops into its  
place,  
And which, once circling in its placid  
round,  
Not all the tumult of the earth can  
shake.

“What should we do in that small  
colony  
Of pinched fanatics, who would rather  
choose  
Freedom to clip an inch more from their  
hair,  
Than the great chance of setting Eng-  
land free?  
Not there, amid the stormy wilderness,  
Should we learn wisdom; or if learned,  
what room  
To put it into act, — else worse than  
naught?  
We learn our souls more, tossing for an  
hour  
Upon this huge and ever-vexed sea  
Of human thought, where kingdoms go  
to wreck  
Like fragile bubbles yonder in the  
stream,  
Than in a cycle of New England sloth,  
Broke only by a petty Indian war,  
Or quarrel for a letter more or less  
In some hard word, which, spelt in  
either way,  
Not their most learnèd clerks can un-  
derstand.  
New times demand new measures and  
new men;



The world advances, and in time out-  
grows  
The laws that in our fathers' day were  
best;  
And, doubtless, after us, some purer  
scheme  
Will be shaped out by wiser men than  
we,  
Made wiser by the steady growth of  
truth.  
We cannot hale Utopia on by force;  
But better, almost, be at work in sin,  
Than in a brute inaction browse and  
sleep.  
No man is born into the world whose  
work  
Is not born with him; there is always  
work,  
And tools to work withal, for those who  
will;  
And blessed are the horny hands of toil!  
The busy world shoves angrily aside  
The man who stands with arms akimbo  
set,  
Until occasion tells him what to do;  
And he who waits to have his task  
marked out  
Shall die and leave his errand unfulfilled.  
Our time is one that calls for earnest  
deeds:  
Reason and Government, like two broad  
seas,  
Yearn for each other with outstretchèd  
arms  
Across this narrow isthmus of the throne,  
And roll their white surf higher every  
day.  
One age moves onward, and the next  
builds up  
Cities and gorgeous palaces, where stood  
The rude log-huts of those who tamed  
the wild,  
Rearing from out the forests they had  
felled  
The goodly framework of a fairer state;  
The builder's trowel and the settler's axe  
Are seldom wielded by the selfsame  
hand;  
Ours is the harder task, yet not the less  
Shall we receive the blessing for our toil  
From the choice spirits of the aftertime.  
My soul is not a palace of the past,  
Where outworn creeds, like Rome's gray  
senate, quake,  
Hearing afar the Vandal's trumpet hoarse,  
That shakes old systems with a thunder-  
fit.

The time is ripe, and rotten-ripe, for  
change;  
Then let it come: I have no dread of  
what  
Is called for by the instinct of mankind;  
Nor think I that God's world will fall  
apart  
Because we tear a parchment more or  
less.  
Truth is eternal, but her effluence,  
With endless change, is fitted to the  
hour;  
Her mirror is turned forward to reflect  
The promise of the future, not the past.  
He who would win the name of truly  
great  
Must understand his own age and the  
next,  
And make the present ready to fulfil  
Its prophecy, and with the future merge  
Gently and peacefully, as wave with  
wave.  
The future works out great men's pur-  
poses;  
The present is enough for common souls,  
Who, never looking forward, are indeed  
Mere clay, wherein the footprints of  
their age  
Are petrified forever: better those  
Who lead the blind old giant by the  
hand  
From out the pathless desert where he  
gropes,  
And set him onward in his darksome  
way.  
I do not fear to follow out the truth,  
Albeit along the precipice's edge.  
Let us speak plain: there is more force  
in names  
Than most men dream of; and a lie may  
keep  
Its throne a whole age longer, if it skulk  
Behind the shield of some fair-seeming  
name.  
Let us call tyrants *tyrants*, and main-  
tain  
That only freedom comes by grace of  
God,  
And all that comes not by his grace must  
fall;  
For men in earnest have no time to waste  
In patching fig-leaves for the naked  
truth.

"I will have one more grapple with  
the man

Charles Stuart: whom the boy o'ercame,



The man stands not in awe of I, perchance,  
 Am one raised up by the Almighty arm  
 To witness some great truth to all the world.  
 Souls destined to o'erleap the vulgar lot,  
 And mould the world unto the scheme of God,  
 Have a fore-consciousness of their high doom,  
 As men are known to shiver at the heart  
 When the cold shadow of some coming ill  
 Creeps slowly o'er their spirits unawares.  
 Hath God less power of prophecy than I?  
 How else could men whom God hath called to sway  
 Earth's rudder, and to steer the bark of Truth,  
 Beating against the tempest tow'rd her port,  
 Bear all the mean and buzzing grievances,  
 The petty martyrdoms, wherewith Sin strives  
 To weary out the tethered hope of Faith?  
 The sneers, the unrecognized look of friends,  
 Who worship the dead corpse of old king Custom,  
 Where it doth lie in state within the Church,  
 Striving to cover up the mighty ocean  
 With a man's palm, and making even the truth  
 Lie for them, holding up the glass reversed,  
 To make the hope of man seem farther off?  
 My God! when I read o'er the bitter lives  
 Of men whose eager hearts were quite too great  
 To beat beneath the cramped mode of the day,  
 And see them mocked at by the world they love,  
 Haggling with prejudice for penny-worths  
 Of that reform which their hard toil will make  
 The common birthright of the age to come,—  
 When I see this, spite of my faith in God,  
 I marvel how their hearts bear up so long;

Nor could they but for this same prophecy,  
 This inward feeling of the glorious end.

“Deem me not fond; but in my warmer youth,  
 Ere my heart's bloom was soiled and brushed away,  
 I had great dreams of mighty things to come;  
 Of conquest, whether by the sword or pen  
 I knew not; but some conquest I would have,  
 Or else swift death: now wiser grown in years,  
 I find youth's dreams are but the flutterings  
 Of those strong wings whereon the soul shall soar  
 In after time to win a starry throne;  
 And so I cherish them, for they were lots,  
 Which I, a boy, cast in the helm of Fate.  
 Now will I draw them, since a man's right hand,  
 A right hand guided by an earnest soul,  
 With a true instinct, takes the golden prize  
 From out a thousand blanks. What men call luck  
 Is the prerogative of valiant souls,  
 The fealty life pays its rightful kings.  
 The helm is shaking now, and I will stay  
 To pluck my lot forth; it were sin to flee!”

So they two turned together; one to die,  
 Fighting for freedom on the bloody field;  
 The other, far more happy, to become  
 A name earth wears forever next her heart;  
 One of the few that have a right to rank  
 With the true Makers: for his spirit wrought  
 Order from Chaos; proved that right divine  
 Dwelt only in the excellence of truth;  
 And far within old Darkness' hostile lines  
 Advanced and pitched the shining tents of Light.  
 Nor shall the grateful Muse forget to tell,  
 That—not the least among his many claims

To deathless honor — he was MILTON'S  
friend,  
A man not second among those who  
lived  
To show us that the poet's lyre demands  
An arm of tougher sinew than the sword.

## A CHIPPEWA LEGEND.\*

ἄλγεῖνά μὲν μοι καὶ λέγειν ἴσθιν τάδε  
ἄλγος δὲ σιγῆν.

ÆSCHYLUS, *Prom. Vincl.* 197, 198.

THE old Chief, feeling now wellnigh  
his end,  
Called his two eldest children to his side,  
And gave them, in few words, his parting  
charge!  
"My son and daughter, me ye see no  
more;  
The happy hunting-grounds await me,  
green  
With change of spring and summer  
through the year:  
But, for remembrance, after I am gone,  
Be kind to little Sheemah for my sake:  
Weakling he is and young, and knows  
not yet  
To set the trap, or draw the seasoned  
bow;  
Therefore of both your loves he hath  
more need,  
And he, who needeth love, to love hath  
right;  
It is not like our furs and stores of corn,  
Whereto we claim sole title by our toil,  
But the Great Spirit plants it in our  
hearts,  
And waters it, and gives it sun, to be  
The common stock and heritage of all:  
Therefore be kind to Sheemah, that  
yourselves  
May not be left deserted in your need."

Alone, beside a lake, their wigwam  
stood,  
Far from the other dwellings of their  
tribe;  
And, after many moons, the loneliness  
Wearied the elder brother, and he said,  
"Why should I dwell here far from men,  
shut out  
From the free, natural joys that fit my  
age?"

\* For the leading incidents in this tale I  
am indebted to the very valuable "Algic  
Researches" of Henry R. Schoolcraft, Esq.

Lo, I am tall and strong, well skilled to  
hunt,  
Patient of toil and hunger, and not yet  
Have seen the danger which I dared not  
look  
Full in the face; what hinders me to be  
A mighty Brave and Chief among my  
kin?"  
So, taking up his arrows and his bow,  
As if to hunt, he journeyed swiftly on,  
Until he gained the wigwams of his  
tribe,  
Where, choosing out a bride, he soon  
forgot,  
In all the fret and bustle of new life,  
The little Sheemah and his father's  
charge.

Now when the sister found her brother  
gone,  
And that, for many days, he came not  
back,  
She wept for Sheemah more than for  
herself;  
For Love bides longest in a woman's  
heart,  
And flutters many times before he flies,  
And then doth perch so nearly, that a  
word  
May lure him back to his accustomed  
nest;  
And Duty lingers even when Love is  
gone,  
Oft looking out in hope of his return;  
And, after Duty hath been driven forth,  
Then Selfishness creeps in the last of all,  
Warming her lean hands at the lonely  
hearth,  
And crouching o'er the embers, to shut  
out  
Whatever paltry warmth and light are  
left,  
With avaricious greed, from all beside.  
So, for long months, the sister hunted  
wide,  
And cared for little Sheemah tenderly;  
But, daily more and more, the loneliness  
Grew wearisome, and to herself she  
sighed,  
"Am I not fair? at least the glassy pool,  
That hath no cause to flatter, tells me so;  
But, O, how flat and meaningless the tale,  
Unless it tremble on a lover's tongue!  
Beauty hath no true glass, except it be  
In the sweet privacy of loving eyes."  
Thus deemed she idly, and forgot the  
lore

Which she had learned of nature and the  
woods,  
That beauty's chief reward is to itself,  
And that Love's mirror holds no image  
long  
Save of the inward fairness, blurred and  
lost  
Unless kept clear and white by Duty's  
care.  
So she went forth and sought the haunts  
of men,  
And, being wedded, in her household  
cares,  
Soon, like the elder brother, quite forgot  
The little Sheemah and her father's  
charge.

But Sheemah, left alone within the  
lodge,  
Waited and waited, with a shrinking  
heart,  
Thinking each rustle was his sister's step,  
Till hope grew less and less, and then  
went out,  
And every sound was changed from hope  
to fear.  
Few sounds there were:—the dropping  
of a nut,  
The squirrel's chirrup, and the jay's  
harsh scream,  
Autumn's sad remnants of blithe Sum-  
mer's cheer,  
Heard at long intervals, seemed but to  
make  
The dreadful void of silence silenter.  
Soon what small store his sister left was  
gone,  
And, through the Autumn, he made shift  
to live  
On roots and berries, gathered in much  
fear  
Of wolves, whose ghastly howl he heard  
oftimes,  
Hollow and hungry, at the dead of night.  
But Winter came at last, and, when the  
snow,  
Thick-heaped for gleaming leagues o'er  
hill and plain,  
Spread its unbroken silence over all,  
Made bold by hunger, he was fain to glean  
(More sick at heart than Ruth, and all  
alone)  
After the harvest of the merciless wolf,  
Grim Boaz, who, sharp-ribbed and gaunt,  
yet feared  
A thing more wild and starving than  
himself;

Till, by degrees, the wolf and he grew  
friends,  
And shared together all the winter  
through.

Late in the Spring, when all the ice  
was gone,  
The elder brother, fishing in the lake,  
Upon whose edge his father's wigwam  
stood,  
Heard a low moaning noise upon the  
shore:  
Half like a child it seemed, half like a  
wolf,  
And straightway there was something in  
his heart  
That said, "It is thy brother Sheemah's  
voice."  
So, paddling swiftly to the bank, he saw,  
Within a little thicket close at hand,  
A child that seemed fast changing to a  
wolf,  
From the neck downward, gray with  
shaggy hair,  
That still crept on and upward as he  
looked.  
The face was turned away, but well he  
knew  
That it was Sheemah's, even his broth-  
er's face.  
Then with his trembling hands he hid  
his eyes,  
And bowed his head, so that he might  
not see  
The first look of his brother's eyes, and  
cried,  
"O Sheemah! O my brother, speak to  
me!  
Dost thou not know me, that I am thy  
brother?  
Come to me, little Sheemah, thou shalt  
dwell  
With me henceforth, and know no care  
or want!"  
Sheemah was silent for a space, as if  
'T were hard to summon up a human  
voice,  
And, when he spake, the voice was as  
a wolf's:  
"I know thee not, nor art thou what  
thou say'st;  
I have none other brethren than the  
wolves,  
And, till thy heart be changed from  
what it is,  
Thou art not worthy to be called their  
kin."



Then groaned the other, with a choking  
tongue,

"Alas! my heart is changed right bit-  
terly;

"T is shrunk and parched within me  
even now!"

And, looking upward fearfully, he saw

Only a wolf that shrank away and ran,

Ugly and fierce, to hide among the  
woods.

#### STANZAS ON FREEDOM.

MEN! whose boast it is that ye  
Come of fathers brave and free,  
If there breathe on earth a slave,  
Are ye truly free and brave?  
If ye do not feel the chain,  
When it works a brother's pain,  
Are ye not base slaves indeed,  
Slaves unworthy to be freed?

Women! who shall one day bear  
Sons to breathe New England air,  
If ye hear, without a blush,  
Deeds to make the roused blood rush  
Like red lava through your veins,  
For your sisters now in chains, —  
Answer! are ye fit to be  
Mothers of the brave and free?

Is true Freedom but to break  
Fetters for our own dear sake,  
And, with leathern hearts, forget  
That we owe mankind a debt?  
No! true freedom is to share  
All the chains our brothers wear,  
And, with heart and hand, to be  
Earnest to make others free!

They are slaves who fear to speak  
For the fallen and the weak;  
They are slaves who will not choose  
Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,  
Rather than in silence shrink  
From the truth they needs must think;  
They are slaves who dare not be  
In the right with two or three.

#### COLUMBUS.

THE cordage creaks and rattles in the  
wind,  
With whims of sudden hush; the reel-  
ing sea

Now thumps like solid rock beneath the  
stern,

Now leaps with clumsy wrath, strikes  
short, and, falling

Crumbled to whispery foam, slips rus-  
tling down

The broad backs of the waves, which  
jostle and crowd

To fling themselves upon that unknown  
shore,

Their used familiar since the dawn of  
time,

Whither this foredoomed life is guided  
on

To sway on triumph's hushed, aspiring  
poise

One glittering moment, then to break  
fulfilled.

How lonely is the sea's perpetual swing,  
The melancholy wash of endless waves,  
The sigh of some grim monster unde-  
scribed,

Fear-painted on the canvas of the dark,  
Shifting on his uneasy pillow of brine!

Yet night brings more companions than  
the day

To this drear waste; new constellations  
burn,

And fairer stars, with whose calm height  
my soul

Finds nearer sympathy than with my  
herd

Of earthen souls, whose vision's scanty  
ring

Makes me its prisoner to beat my wings  
Against the cold bars of their unbe-  
lief,

Knowing in vain my own free heaven  
beyond.

O God! this world, so crammed with  
eager life,

That comes and goes and wanders back  
to silence

Like the idle wind, which yet man's  
shaping mind

Can make his drudge to swell the long-  
ing sails

Of highest endeavor, — this mad, un-  
thrif world,

Which, every hour, throws life enough  
away

To make her deserts kind and hospita-  
ble,

Lets her great destinies be waved aside  
By smooth, lip-reverent, formal infi-  
dels,



Who weigh the God they not believe  
with gold,

And find no spot in Judas, save that he,  
Driving a duller bargain than he ought,  
Saddled his guild with too cheap prece-  
dent.

O Faith! if thou art strong, thine oppo-  
site

Is mighty also, and the dull fool's sneer  
Hath ofttimes shot chill palsy through  
the arm

Just lifted to achieve its crowning deed,  
And made the firm-based heart, that  
would have quailed

The rack or fagot, shudder like a leaf  
Wrinkled with frost, and loose upon its  
stem.

The wicked and the weak, by some dark  
law,

Have a strange power to shut and rivet  
down

Their own horizon round us, to unwing  
Our heaven-aspiring visions, and to blur  
With surly clouds the Future's gleam-  
ing peaks,

Far seen across the brine of thankless  
years.

If the chosen soul could never be alone  
In deep mid-silence, open-doored to God,  
No greatness ever had been dreamed or  
done;

Among dull hearts a prophet never  
grew;

The nurse of full-grown souls is soli-  
tude.

The old world is effete; there man with  
man

Jostles, and, in the brawl for means to  
live,

Life is trod underfoot,—Life, the one  
block

Of marble that's vouchsafed wherefrom  
to carve

Our great thoughts, white and godlike,  
to shine down

The future, Life, the irredeemable block,  
Which one o'er-hasty chisel-dint oft  
mars,

Scanting our room to cut the features  
out

Of our full hope, so forcing us to crown  
With a mean head the perfect limbs, or  
leave

The god's face glowing o'er a satyr's  
trunk,

Failure's brief epitaph.

Yes, Europe's world

Reels on to judgment; there the com-  
mon need,

Losing God's sacred use, to be a bond  
'Twixt Me and Thee, sets each one  
scowlingly

O'er his own selfish hoard at bay; no  
state,

Knit strongly with eternal fibres up  
Of all men's separate and united weals,  
Self-poised and sole as stars, yet one as  
light,

Holds up a shape of large Humanity  
To which by natural instinct every  
man

Pays loyalty exulting, by which all  
Mould their own lives, and feel their  
pulses filled

With the red, fiery blood of the general  
life,

Making them mighty in peace, as now  
in war

They are, even in the flush of victory,  
weak,

Conquering that manhood which should  
them subdue.

And what gift bring I to this untried  
world?

Shall the same tragedy be played anew,  
And the same lurid curtain drop at  
last

On one dread desolation, one fierce crash  
Of that recoil which on its makers God  
Lets Ignorance and Sin and Hunger  
make,

Early or late? Or shall that common-  
wealth

Whose potent unity and concentric force  
Can draw these scattered joints and  
parts of men

Into a whole ideal man once more,  
Which sucks not from its limbs the life  
away,

But sends it flood-tide and creates  
itself

Over again in every citizen,  
Be there built up? For me, I have no  
choice;

I might turn back to other destinies,  
For one sincere key opens all Fortune's  
doors;

But whoso answers not God's earliest  
call

Forfeits or dulls that faculty supreme  
Of lying open to his genius

Which makes the wise heart certain of  
its ends.

Here am I; for what end God knows,  
 not I;  
 Westward still points the inexorable  
 soul:  
 Here am I, with no friend but the sad  
 sea,  
 The beating heart of this great enter-  
 prise,  
 Which, without me, would stiffen in  
 swift death;  
 This have I mused on, since mine eye  
 could first  
 Among the stars distinguish and with  
 joy  
 Rest on that God-fed Pharos of the  
 north,  
 On some blue promontory of heaven  
 lighted  
 That juts far out into the upper sea;  
 To this one hope my heart hath clung for  
 years,  
 As would a foundling to the talisman  
 Hung round his neck by hands he knew  
 not whose;  
 A poor, vile thing and dross to all beside,  
 Yet he therein can feel a virtue left  
 By the sad pressure of a mother's hand,  
 And unto him it still is tremulous  
 With palpitating haste and wet with  
 tears,  
 The key to him of hope and humanness,  
 The coarse shell of life's pearl, Expect-  
 ancy.  
 This hope hath been to me for love and  
 fame,  
 Hath made me wholly lonely on the  
 earth,  
 Building me up as in a thick-ribbed  
 tower,  
 Wherewith enwalled my watching spirit  
 burned,  
 Conquering its little island from the  
 Dark,  
 Sole as a scholar's lamp, and heard men's  
 steps,  
 In the far hurry of the outward world,  
 Pass dimly forth and back, sounds heard  
 in dream.  
 As Ganymede by the eagle was snatched  
 up  
 From the gross sod to be Jove's cup-  
 bearer,  
 So was I lifted by my great design:  
 And who hath trod Olympus, from his  
 eye  
 Fades not that broader outlook of the  
 gods;

His life's low valleys overbrow earth's  
 clouds,  
 And that Olympian spectre of the past  
 Looms towering up in sovereign memory,  
 Beckoning his soul from meaner heights  
 of doom.  
 Had but the shadow of the Thunderer's  
 bird,  
 Flashing athwart my spirit, made of me  
 A swift-betraying vision's Ganymede,  
 Yet to have greatly dreamed precludes  
 low ends;  
 Great days have ever such a morning-red,  
 On such a base great futures are built up,  
 And aspiration, though not put in act,  
 Comes back to ask its plighted troth  
 again,  
 Still watches round its grave the unlaid  
 ghost  
 Of a dead virtue, and makes other hopes,  
 Save that implacable one, seem thin and  
 bleak  
 As shadows of bare trees upon the snow,  
 Bound freezing there by the un pitying  
 moon.  
 While other youths perplexed their man-  
 dolins,  
 Praying that Thetis would her fingers  
 twine  
 In the loose glories of her lover's hair,  
 And wile another kiss to keep back day,  
 I, stretched beneath the many-centuried  
 shade  
 Of some writhed oak, the wood's Lao-  
 coön,  
 Did of my hope a dryad mistress make,  
 Whom I would woo to meet me privily,  
 Or underneath the stars, or when the  
 moon  
 Flecked all the forest floor with scattered  
 pearls.  
 O days whose memory tames to fawning  
 down  
 The surly fell of Ocean's bristled neck!

I know not when this hope enthralled  
 me first,  
 But from my boyhood up I loved to hear  
 The tall pine-forests of the Apennine  
 Murmur their hoary legends of the sea,  
 Which hearing, I in vision clear beheld  
 The sudden dark of tropic night shut  
 down  
 O'er the huge whisper of great watery  
 wastes,  
 The while a pair of herons trailingy.

Flapped inland, where some league-wide  
 river hurled  
 The yellow spoil of un conjectured realms  
 Far through a gulf's green silence, never  
 scarred  
 By any but the North-wind's hurrying  
 keels.  
 And not the pines alone ; all sights and  
 sounds  
 To my world-seeking heart paid fealty,  
 And catered for it as the Cretan bees  
 Brought honey to the baby Jupiter,  
 Who in his soft hand crushed a violet,  
 Godlike foremusing the rough thunder's  
 gripe ;  
 Then did I entertain the poet's song,  
 My great Idea's guest, and, passing o'er  
 That iron bridge the Tuscan built to hell,  
 I heard Ulysses tell of mountain-chains  
 Whose adamantine links, his manacles,  
 The western main shook growling, and  
 still gnawed.  
 I brooded on the wise Athenian's tale  
 Of happy Atlantis, and heard Björne's  
 keel  
 Crunch the gray pebbles of the Vinland  
 shore :  
 I listened, musing, to the prophecy  
 Of Nero's tutor-victim ; lo, the birds  
 Sing darkling, conscious of the climbing  
 dawn.  
 And I believed the poets ; it is they  
 Who utter wisdom from the central deep,  
 And, listening to the inner flow of things,  
 Speak to the age out of eternity.  
  
 Ah me ! old hermits sought for solitude  
 In caves and desert places of the earth,  
 Where their own heart-beat was the only  
 stir  
 Of living thing that comforted the year ;  
 But the bald pillar-top of Simeon,  
 In midnight's blankest waste, were pop-  
 ulous,  
 Matched with the isolation drear and  
 deep  
 Of him who pines among the swarm of  
 men,  
 At once a new thought's king and pris-  
 oner,  
 Feeling the truer life within his life,  
 The fountain of his spirit's prophecy,  
 Sinking away and wasting, drop by drop,  
 In the ungrateful sands of sceptic ears.  
 He in the palace-aisles of untrod woods  
 Doth walk a king ; for him the pent-up  
 cell  
 Widens beyond the circles of the stars,  
 And all the sceptred spirits of the past  
 Come thronging in to greet him as their  
 peer ;  
 But in the market-place's glare and  
 throng  
 He sits apart, an exile, and his brow  
 Aches with the mocking memory of its  
 crown.  
 Yet to the spirit select there is no choice ;  
 He cannot say, This will I do, or that,  
 For the cheap means putting Heaven's  
 ends in pawn,  
 And bartering his bleak rocks, the free-  
 hold stern  
 Of destiny's first-born, for smoother fields  
 That yield no crop of self-denying will ;  
 A hand is stretched to him from out the  
 dark,  
 Which grasping without question, he is  
 led  
 Where there is work that he must do for  
 God.  
 The trial still is the strength's comple-  
 ment,  
 And the uncertain, dizzy path that scales  
 The sheer heights of supremest purposes  
 Is steeper to the angel than the child.  
 Chances have laws as fixed as planets  
 have,  
 And disappointment's dry and bitter  
 root,  
 Envy's harsh berries, and the choking  
 pool  
 Of the world's scorn, are the right  
 mother-milk  
 To the tough hearts that pioneer their  
 kind,  
 And break a pathway to those unknown  
 realms  
 That in the earth's broad shadow lie  
 enthralled ;  
 Endurance is the crowning quality,  
 And patience all the passion of great  
 hearts ;  
 These are their stay, and when the leaden  
 world  
 Sets its hard face against their fateful  
 thought,  
 And brute strength, like the Gaulish  
 conqueror,  
 Clangs his huge glaive down in the other  
 scale,  
 The inspired soul but flings his patience  
 in,  
 And slowly that outweighs the ponderous  
 globe, —  
 One faith against a whole earth's un-  
 belief.



One soul against the flesh of all man-kind.

Thus ever seems it when my soul can hear  
The voice that errs not ; then my triumph gleams,

O'er the blank ocean beckoning, and all night

My heart flies on before me as I sail ;  
Far on I see my lifelong enterprise,  
That rose like Ganges mid the freezing snows

Of a world's solitude, sweep broadening down,

And, gathering to itself a thousand streams,

Grow sacred ere it mingle with the sea ;  
I see the un gated wall of chaos old,  
With blocks Cyclopean hewn of solid night,

Fade like a wreath of unreturning mist  
Before the irreversible feet of light ; —  
And lo, with what clear omen in the east  
On day's gray threshold stands the eager dawn,

Like young Leander rosy from the sea  
Glowing at Hero's lattice !

One day more

These muttering shoalbrains leave the helm to me :

God, let me not in their dull ooze be stranded ;

Let not this one frail bark, to hollow which

I have dug out the pith and sinewy heart  
Of my aspiring life's fair trunk, be so  
Cast up to warp and blacken in the sun,  
Just as the opposing wind 'gins whistle off

His cheek-swollen pack, and from the leaning mast

Fortune's full sail strains forward !

One poor day ! —

Remember whose and not how short it is !

It is God's day, it is Columbus's.  
A lavish day ! One day, with life and heart,

Is more than time enough to find a world.

#### AN INCIDENT OF THE FIRE AT HAMBURG.

THE tower of old Saint Nicholas soared upward to the skies,

Like some huge piece of Nature's make,  
The growth of centuries ;

You could not deem its crowding spires  
a work of human art,  
They seemed to struggle lightward from  
a sturdy living heart.

Not Nature's self more freely speaks in  
crystal or in oak,  
Than, through the pious builder's hand,  
in that gray pile she spoke ;  
And as from acorn springs the oak, so,  
freely and alone,  
Sprang from his heart this hymn to God,  
sung in obedient stone.

It seemed a wondrous freak of chance, so  
perfect, yet so rough,  
A whim of Nature crystallized slowly in  
granite tough ;  
The thick spires yearned towards the sky  
in quaint harmonious lines,  
And in broad sunlight basked and slept,  
like a grove of blasted pines.

Never did rock or stream or tree lay claim  
with better right  
To all the adorning sympathies of shadow  
and of light ;  
And, in that forest petrified, as forester  
there dwells  
Stout Herman, the old sacristan, sole  
lord of all its bells.

Surge leaping after surge, the fire roared  
onward red as blood,  
Till half of Hamburg lay engulfed be-  
neath the eddying flood ;  
For miles away the fiery spray poured  
down its deadly rain,  
And back and forth the billows sucked,  
and paused, and burst again.

From square to square with tiger leaps  
panted the lustful fire,  
The air to leeward shuddered with the  
gasps of its desire ;  
And church and palace, which even now  
stood whelmed but to the knee,  
Lift their black roofs like breakers lone  
amid the whirling sea.

Up in his tower old Herman sat and  
watched with quiet look ;  
His soul had trusted God too long to be  
at last forsook ;  
He could not fear, for surely God a path-  
way would unfold  
Through this red sea for faithful hearts,  
as once he did of old.

But scarcely can he cross himself, or on  
his good saint call,  
Before the sacrilegious flood o'erleaped  
the churchyard wall ;  
And, ere a *pater* half was said, mid smoke  
and crackling glare,  
His island tower scarce juts its head  
above the wide despair.

Upon the peril's desperate peak his heart  
stood up sublime ;  
His first thought was for God above, his  
next was for his chime ;

"Sing now and make your voices heard  
in hymns of praise," cried he,  
"As did the Israelites of old, safe walk-  
ing through the sea !

"Through this red sea our God hath  
made the pathway safe to shore ;  
Our promised land stands full in sight ;  
shout now as ne'er before !"  
And as the tower came crushing down,  
the bells, in clear accord,  
Pealed forth the grand old German  
hymn, — "All good souls, praise  
the Lord !"

## THE SOWER.

I SAW a Sower walking slow  
Across the earth, from east to west ;  
His hair was white as mountain snow,  
His head drooped forward on his breast.

With shrivelled hands he flung his seed,  
Nor ever turned to look behind ;  
Of sight or sound he took no heed ;  
It seemed he was both deaf and blind.

His dim face showed no soul beneath,  
Yet in my heart I felt a stir,  
As if I looked upon the sheath  
That once had held Excalibur.

I heard, as still the seed he cast,  
How, crooning to himself, he sung,  
"I sow again the holy Past,  
The happy days when I was young.

"Then all was wheat without a tare,  
Then all was righteous, fair, and true ;  
And I am he whose thoughtful care  
Shall plant the Old World in the New.

"The fruitful germs I scatter free,  
With busy hand, while all men sleep ;

In Europe now, from sea to sea,  
The nations bless me as they reap."

Then I looked back along his path,  
And heard the clash of steel on steel,  
Where man faced man, in deadly wrath,  
While clanged the tocsin's hurrying peal.

The sky with burning towns flared red,  
Nearer the noise of fighting rolled,  
And brothers' blood, by brothers shed,  
Crept curdling over pavements cold.

Then marked I how each germ of truth  
Which through the dotard's fingers ran  
Was mated with a dragon's tooth  
Whence there sprang up an armed man.

I shouted, but he could not hear ;  
Made signs, but these he could not see ;  
And still, without a doubt or fear,  
Broadcast he scattered anarchy.

Long to my straining ears the blast  
Brought faintly back the words he  
sung :

"I sow again the holy Past,  
The happy days when I was young."

## HUNGER AND COLD.

SISTERS two, all praise to you,  
With your faces pinched and blue ;  
To the poor man you've been true  
From of old :

You can speak the keenest word,  
You are sure of being heard,  
From the point you're never stirred,  
Hunger and Cold !

Let sleek statesmen temporize ;  
Palsied are their shifts and lies  
When they meet your bloodshot eyes,  
Grim and bold ;

Policy you set at naught,  
In their traps you'll not be caught,  
You're too honest to be bought,  
Hunger and Cold !

Bolt and bar the palace door ;  
While the mass of men are poor,  
Naked truth grows more and more  
Uncontrolled ;

You had never yet, I guess,  
Any praise for bashfulness,  
You can visit sans court-dress,  
Hunger and Cold !

While the music fell and rose,  
 And the dance reeled to its close,  
 Where her round of costly woes  
 Fashion strolled,  
 I beheld with shuddering fear  
 Wolves' eyes through the windows peer ;  
 Little dream they you are near,  
 Hunger and Cold !

When the toiler's heart you clutch,  
 Conscience is not valued much,  
 He recks not a bloody smutch  
 On his gold :  
 Everything to you defers,  
 You are potent reasoners,  
 At your whisper Treason stirs,  
 Hunger and Cold !

Rude comparisons you draw,  
 Words refuse to sate your maw,  
 Your gaunt limbs the cobweb law  
 Cannot hold :  
 You're not clogged with foolish pride,  
 But can seize a right denied :  
 Somehow God is on your side,  
 Hunger and Cold !

You respect no hoary wrong  
 More for having triumphed long ;  
 Its past victims, haggard throng,  
 From the mould  
 You unbury : swords and spears  
 Weaker are than poor men's tears,  
 Weaker than your silent years,  
 Hunger and Cold !

Let them guard both hall and bower ;  
 Through the window you will glower,  
 Patient till your reckoning hour  
 Shall be tolled ;  
 Cheeks are pale, but hands are red,  
 Guiltless blood may chance be shed,  
 But ye must and will be fed,  
 Hunger and Cold !

God has plans man must not spoil,  
 Some were made to starve and toil,  
 Some to share the wine and oil,  
 We are told:  
 Devil's theories are these,  
 Stifling hope and love and peace,  
 Framed your hideous lusts to please,  
 Hunger and Cold !

Scatter ashes on thy head,  
 Tears of burning sorrow shed,

Earth ! and be by Pity led  
 To Love's fold ;  
 Ere they block the very door  
 With lean corpses of the poor,  
 And will hush for naught but gore,  
 Hunger and Cold !  
 1844.

#### THE LANDLORD.

WHAT boot your houses and your lands!  
 In spite of close-drawn deed and fence,  
 Like water, 'twixt your cheated hands,  
 They slip into the graveyard's sands,  
 And mock your ownership's pretence.

How shall you speak to urge your right,  
 Choked with that soil for which you  
 lust ?  
 The bit of clay, for whose delight  
 You grasp, is mortgaged, too ; Death  
 might  
 Foreclose this very day in dust.

Fence as you please, this plain poor  
 man,  
 Whose only fields are in his wit,  
 Who shapes the world, as best he can,  
 According to God's higher plan,  
 Owns you, and fences as is fit.

Though yours the rents, his incomes  
 wax  
 By right of eminent domain ;  
 From factory tall to woodman's axe,  
 All things on earth must pay their tax,  
 To feed his hungry heart and brain.

He takes you from your easy-chair,  
 And what he plans that you must  
 do ;  
 You sleep in down, eat dainty fare, —  
 He mounts his crazy garret-stair  
 And starves, the landlord over you.

Feeding the clods your idlesse drains,  
 You make more green six feet of soil ;  
 His fruitful word, like suns and rains,  
 Partakes the seasons' bounteous pains,  
 And toils to lighten human toil.

Your lands ; with force or cunning got,  
 Shrink to the measure of the grave ;  
 But Death himself abridges not  
 The tenures of almighty thought,  
 The titles of the wise and brave.



TO A PINE-TREE.

FAR up on Katahdin thou towerest,  
 Purple-blue with the distance and  
 vast;  
 Like a cloud o'er the lowlands thou  
 lowerest,  
 That hangs poised on a lull in the  
 blast,  
 To its fall leaning awful.

In the storm, like a prophet o'er-mad-  
 dened,  
 Thou singest and tosses thy branches;  
 Thy heart with the terror is gladdened,  
 Thou forebodes the dread avalanches,  
 When whole mountains swoop vale-  
 ward.

In the calm thou o'erstretchest the val-  
 leys  
 With thine arms, as if blessings im-  
 ploring,  
 Like an old king led forth from his pal-  
 ace,  
 When his people to battle are pouring  
 From the city beneath him.

To the lumberer asleep 'neath thy gloom-  
 ing  
 Thou dost sing of wild billows in mo-  
 tion,  
 Till he longs to be swung mid their boom-  
 ing  
 In the tents of the Arabs of ocean,  
 Whose finned isles are their cattle.

For the gale snatches thee for his lyre,  
 With mad hand crashing melody  
 frantic,  
 While he pours forth his mighty de-  
 sire  
 To leap down on the eager Atlantic,  
 Whose arms stretch to his play-  
 mate.

The wild storm makes his lair in thy  
 branches,  
 Sweeping thence on the continent un-  
 der;  
 Like a lion, crouched close on his  
 haunches,  
 There awaiteth his leap the fierce  
 thunder,  
 Growling low with impatience.

Spite of winter, thou keep'st thy green  
 glory,  
 Lusty father of Titans past number!  
 The snow-flakes alone make thee hoary,  
 Nestling close to thy branches in  
 slumber,  
 And thee mantling with silence.

Thou alone know'st the splendor of  
 winter,  
 Mid thy snow-silvered, hushed pre-  
 cipices,  
 Hearing crags of green ice groan and  
 splinter,  
 And then plunge down the muffled  
 abysses  
 In the quiet of midnight.

Thou alone know'st the glory of summer,  
 Gazing down on thy broad seas of  
 forest,  
 On thy subjects that send a proud mur-  
 mur  
 Up to thee, to their sachem, who tow-  
 erest  
 From thy bleak throne to heaven.

SI DESCENDERO IN INFERNUM, ADES.

O, WANDERING dim on the extremest  
 edge  
 Of God's bright providence, whose  
 spirits sigh  
 Drearly in you, like the winter sedge  
 That shivers o'er the dead pool stiff  
 and dry,  
 A thin, sad voice, when the bold wind  
 roars by  
 From the clear North of Duty, —  
 Still by cracked arch and broken shaft I  
 trace  
 That here was once a shrine and holy  
 place  
 Of the supernal Beauty,  
 A child's play-altar reared of stones  
 and moss,  
 With wilted flowers for offering laid  
 across,  
 Mute recognition of the all-ruling Grace.

How far are ye from the innocent, from  
 those  
 Whose hearts are as a little lane serene,  
 Smooth-heaped from wall to wall with  
 unbroke snows,

Or in the summer blithe with lamb-  
 cropped green,  
 Save the one track, where naught  
 more rude is seen  
 Than the plump wain at even  
 Bringing home four months' sunshine  
 bound in sheaves!  
 How far are ye from those! yet who  
 believes  
 That ye can shut out heaven?  
 Your souls partake its influence, not  
 in vain  
 Nor all unconscious, as that silent lane  
 Its drift of noiseless apple-blooms re-  
 ceives.

Looking within myself, I note how thin  
 A plank of station, chance, or pros-  
 perous fate,  
 Doth fence me from the clutching waves  
 of sin;  
 In my own heart I find the worst  
 man's mate,  
 And see not dimly the smooth-hinged  
 gate  
 That opes to those abysses  
 Where ye grope darkly, — ye who never  
 knew  
 On your young hearts love's consecrating  
 dew,  
 Or felt a mother's kisses,  
 Or home's restraining tendrils round  
 you curled;  
 Ah, side by side with heart's-ease in  
 this world  
 The fatal nightshade grows and bitter rue!

One band ye cannot break, — the force  
 that clips  
 And grasps your circles to the central  
 light;  
 Yours is the prodigal comet's long el-  
 lipse,  
 Self-exiled to the farthest verge of  
 night;  
 Yet strives with you no less that in-  
 ward might  
 No sin hath e'er imbruted;  
 The god in you the creed-dimmed eye  
 eludes;  
 The Law brooks not to have its solitudes  
 By bigot feet polluted;  
 Yet they who watch your God-com-  
 pelled return  
 May see your happy perihelion burn  
 Where the calm sun his unfledged  
 planets broods.

## TO THE EAST.

WONDROUS and awful are thy silent  
 halls,  
 O kingdom of the past!  
 There lie the bygone ages in their palls,  
 Guarded by shadows vast;  
 There all is hushed and breathless,  
 Save when some image of old error falls  
 Earth worshipped once as deathless.

There sits drear Egypt, mid beleaguer-  
 ing sands,  
 Half woman and half beast,  
 The burnt-out torch within her moul-  
 dering hands  
 That once lit all the East;  
 A dotard bleared and hoary,  
 There Asser crouches o'er the blackened  
 brands  
 Of Asia's long-quenched glory.

Still as a city buried 'neath the sea  
 Thy courts and temples stand;  
 Idle as forms on wind-waved tapestry  
 Of saints and heroes grand,  
 Thy phantasms grope and shiver,  
 Or watch the loose shores crumbling si-  
 lently  
 Into Time's gnawing river.

Titanic shapes with faces blank and dun,  
 Of their old godhead lorn,  
 Gaze on the embers of the sunken sun,  
 Which they misdeem for morn;  
 And yet the eternal sorrow  
 In their unmonarched eyes says day is  
 done  
 Without the hope of morrow.

O realm of silence and of swart eclipse,  
 The shapes that haunt thy gloom  
 Make signs to us and move their with-  
 ered lips  
 Across the gulf of doom;  
 Yet all their sound and motion  
 Bring no more freight to us than wraiths  
 of ships  
 On the mirage's ocean.

And if sometimes a moaning wandereth  
 From out thy desolate halls,  
 If some grim shadow of thy living death  
 Across our sunshine falls  
 And scares the world to error,  
 The eternal life sends forth melodious  
 breath  
 To chase the misty terror.

Thy mighty clamors, wars, and world-  
noised deeds  
Are silent now in dust,  
Gone like a tremble of the huddling  
reeds  
Beneath some sudden gust ;  
Thy forms and creeds have vanished,  
Tossed out to wither like unsightly weeds  
From the world's garden banished.

Whatever of true life there was in thee  
Leaps in our age's veins ;  
Wield still thy bent and wrinkled em-  
pery,  
And shake thine idle chains ; —  
To thee thy dross is clinging,  
For us thy martyrs die, thy prophets see,  
Thy poets still are singing.

Here, mid the bleak waves of our strife  
and care,  
Float the green Fortunate Isles  
Where all thy hero-spirits dwell, and  
share  
Our martyrdoms and toils ;  
The present moves attended  
With all of brave and excellent and fair  
That made the old time splendid.

## TO THE FUTURE.

O LAND of Promise ! from what Pisgah's  
height  
Can I behold thy stretch of peaceful  
bowers,  
Thy golden harvests flowing out of sight,  
Thy nestled homes and sun-illumined  
towers ?  
Gazing upon the sunset's high-heaped  
gold,  
Its crags of opal and of chrysolite,  
Its deeps on deeps of glory, that un-  
fold  
Still brightening abysses,  
And blazing precipices,  
Whence but a scanty leap it seems to  
heaven,  
Sometimes a glimpse is given  
Of thy more gorgeous realm, thy more  
unstinted blisses.

O Land of Quiet ! to thy shore the surf  
Of the perturbed Present rolls and  
sleeps ;  
Our storms breathe soft as June upon  
thy turf

And lure out blossoms ; to thy bozom  
leaps,  
As to a mother's, the o'erwearied heart,  
Hearing far off and dim the toiling  
mart,  
The hurrying feet, the curses without  
number,  
And, circled with the glow Elysian  
Of thine exulting vision,  
Out of its very cares woos charms for  
peace and slumber.

To thee the earth lifts up her fettered  
hands  
And cries for vengeance ; with a pity-  
ing smile  
Thou bleesest her, and she forgets her  
hands,  
And her old woe-worn face a little  
while  
Grows young and noble ; unto thee the  
Oppressor  
Looks, and is dumb with awe ;  
The eternal law,  
Which makes the crime its own blind-  
fold redresser,  
Shadows his heart with perilous fore-  
boding,  
And he can see the grim-eyed Doom  
From out the trembling gloom  
Its silent-footed steeds towards his pal-  
ace goading.

What promises hast thou for Poets'  
eyes,  
Aweary of the turmoil and the wrong !  
To all their hopes what overjoyed re-  
plies !  
What undreamed ecstasies for bliss-  
ful song !  
Thy happy plains no war-trump's brawl-  
ing clangor  
Disturbs, and fools the poor to hate  
the poor ;  
The humble glares not on the high with  
anger ;  
Love leaves no grudge at less, no greed  
for more ;  
In vain strives Self the godlike sense to  
smother ;  
From the soul's deeps  
It throbs and leaps ;  
The noble 'neath foul rags beholds his  
long-lost brother.

To thee the Martyr looketh, and his  
fires



Unlock their fangs and leave his  
 spirit free ;  
 To thee the Poet mid his toil aspires,  
 And grief and hunger climb about his  
 knee,  
 Welcome as children ; thou upholdest  
 The lone Inventor by his demon  
 haunted ;  
 The Prophet cries to thee when hearts  
 are coldest,  
 And gazing o'er the midnight's  
 bleak abyss,  
 Sees the drowsed soul awaken at  
 thy kiss,  
 And stretch its happy arms and leap up  
 disenchantèd.

Thou bringest vengeance, but so loving-  
 kindly  
 The guilty thinks it pity ; taught by  
 thee,  
 Fierce tyrants drop the scourges where-  
 with blindly  
 Their own souls they were scarring ;  
 conquerors see  
 With horror in their hands the accursed  
 spear  
 That tore the meek One's side on  
 Calvary,  
 And from their trophies shrink with  
 ghastly fear ;  
 Thou, too, art the Forgiver,  
 The beauty of man's soul to man re-  
 vealing ;  
 The arrows from thy quiver  
 Pierce Error's guilty heart, but only  
 pierce for healing.

O, whither, whither, glory-wingèd  
 dreams,  
 From out Life's sweat and turmoil  
 would ye bear me ?  
 Shut, gates of Fancy, on your golden  
 gleams, —  
 This agony of hopeless contrast spare  
 me !  
 Fade, cheating glow, and leave me to  
 my night !  
 He is a coward, who would bor-  
 row  
 A charm against the present sorrow  
 From the vague Future's promise of de-  
 light :  
 As life's alarms nearer roll,  
 The ancestral buckler calls,  
 Self-clanging from the walls  
 In the high temple of the soul ;

Where are most sorrows, there the po-  
 et's sphere is,  
 To feed the soul with patience,  
 To heal its desolations  
 With words of unshorn truth, with love  
 that never wearies.

## HEBE.

I SAW the twinkle of white feet,  
 I saw the flash of robes descending ;  
 Before her ran an influence fleet,  
 That bowed my heart like barley bend-  
 ing.

As, in bare fields, the searching bees  
 Pilot to blooms beyond our finding,  
 It led me on, by sweet degrees  
 Joy's simple honey-cells unbinding.

Those Graces were that seemed grim  
 Fates ;  
 With nearer love the sky leaned o'er  
 me ;  
 The long-sought Secret's golden gates  
 On musical hinges swung before me.

I saw the brimmed bowl in her grasp  
 Thrilling with godhood ; like a lover  
 I sprang the proffered life to clasp ; --  
 The beaker fell ; the luck was over.

The Earth has drunk the vintage up ;  
 What boots it patch the goblet's splin-  
 ters ?  
 Can Summer fill the icy cup,  
 Whose treacherous crystal is but Win-  
 ter's ?

O spendthrift haste ! await the Gods ;  
 Their nectar crowns the lips of Pa-  
 tience ;  
 Haste scatters on unthankful sods  
 The immortal gift in vain libations.

Coy Hebe flies from those that woo,  
 And shuns the hands would seize upon  
 her ;  
 Follow thy life, and she will sue  
 To pour for thee the cup of honor.

## THE SEARCH.

I WENT to seek for Christ,  
 And Nature seemed so fair  
 That first the woods and fields my youth  
 enticed,

And I was sure to find him there :  
 The temple I forsook,  
 And to the solitude  
 Allegiance paid ; but Winter came and  
 shook  
 The crown and purple from my  
 wood ;  
 His snows, like desert sands, with scorn-  
 ful drift,  
 Besieged the columned aisle and pal-  
 ace-gate ;  
 My Thebes, cut deep with many a sol-  
 emn rift,  
 But epitaphed her own sepulchred  
 state :  
 Then I remembered whom I went to seek,  
 And blessed blunt Winter for his coun-  
 sel bleak.

Back to the world I turned,  
 For Christ, I said, is King ;  
 So the cramped alley and the hut I  
 spurned,  
 As far beneath his sojourning :  
 Mid power and wealth I sought,  
 But found no trace of him,  
 And all the costly offerings I had  
 brought  
 With sudden rust and mould grew  
 dim :  
 I found his tomb, indeed, where, by  
 their laws,  
 All must on stated days themselves  
 imprison,  
 Mocking with bread a dead creed's grin-  
 ning jaws,  
 Witless how long the life had thence  
 arisen ;  
 Due sacrifice to this they set apart,  
 Prizing it more than Christ's own living  
 heart.

So from my feet the dust  
 Of the proud World I shook ;  
 Then came dear Love and shared with  
 me his crust,  
 And half my sorrow's burden took.  
 After the World's soft bed,  
 Its rich and dainty fare,  
 Like down seemed Love's coarse pillow  
 to my head,  
 His cheap food seemed as manna  
 rare ;  
 Fresh-trodden prints of bare and bleed-  
 ing feet,  
 Turned to the heedless city whence I  
 came,

Hard by I saw, and springs of worship  
 sweet  
 Gushed from my cleft heart smitten  
 by the same ;  
 Love looked me in the face and spake no  
 words,  
 But straight I knew those footprints  
 were the Lord's.

I followed where they led,  
 And in a hovel rude,  
 With naught to fence the weather from  
 his head,  
 The King I sought for meekly stood ;  
 A naked, hungry child  
 Clung round his gracious knee,  
 And a poor hunted slave looked up and  
 smiled  
 To bless the smile that set him  
 free ;  
 New miracles I saw his presence do, —  
 No more I knew the hovel bare and  
 poor,  
 The gathered chips into a woodpile  
 grew,  
 The broken morsel swelled to goodly  
 store ;  
 I knelt and wept : my Christ no more  
 I seek,  
 His throne is with the outcast and the  
 weak.

## THE PRESENT CRISIS.

WHEN a deed is done for Freedom,  
 through the broad earth's aching  
 breast  
 Runs a thrill of joy prophetic, trembling  
 on from east to west,  
 And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels  
 the soul within him climb  
 To the awful verge of manhood, as the  
 energy sublime  
 Of a century bursts full-blossomed on  
 the thorny stem of Time.

Through the walls of hut and palace  
 shoots the instantaneous throe,  
 When the travail of the Ages wrings  
 earth's systems to and fro ;  
 At the birth of each new Era, with a  
 recognizing start,  
 Nation wildly looks at nation, standing  
 with mute lips apart,  
 And glad Truth's yet mightier man-child  
 leaps beneath the Future's heart.

So the Evil's triumph sendeth, with  
 a terror and a chill,  
 Under continent to continent, the sense  
 of coming ill,  
 And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels  
 his sympathies with God  
 In hot tear-drops ebbing earthward, to  
 be drunk up by the sod,  
 Till a corpse crawls round unburied,  
 delving in the nobler clod.

For mankind are one in spirit, and an  
 instinct bears along,  
 Round the earth's electric circle, the  
 swift flash of right or wrong ;  
 Whether conscious or unconscious, yet  
 Humanity's vast frame  
 Through its ocean-sundered fibres feels  
 the gush of joy or shame ; —  
 In the gain or loss of one race all the  
 rest have equal claim.

Once to every man and nation comes the  
 moment to decide,  
 In the strife of Truth with Falsehood,  
 for the good or evil side ;  
 Some great cause, God's new Messiah,  
 offering each the bloom or blight,  
 Parts the goats upon the left hand, and  
 the sheep upon the right,  
 And the choice goes by forever 'twixt  
 that darkness and that light.

Hast thou chosen, O my people, on  
 whose party thou shalt stand,  
 Ere the Doom from its worn sandals  
 shakes the dust against our land ?  
 Though the cause of Evil prosper, yet  
 't is Truth alone is strong,  
 And, albeit she wander outcast now, I  
 see around her throng  
 Troops of beautiful, tall angels, to en-  
 shield her from all wrong.

Backward look across the ages and the  
 beacon-moments see,  
 That, like peaks of some sunk continent,  
 jut through Oblivion's sea ;  
 Not an ear in court or market for the  
 low foreboding cry  
 Of those Crises, God's stern winnowers,  
 from whose feet earth's chaff must  
 fly ;  
 Never shows the choice momentous till  
 the judgment hath passed by.

Careless seems the great Avenger ; his-  
 tory's pages but record

One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt  
 old systems and the Word ;  
 Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong  
 forever on the throne, —  
 Yet that scaffold sways the future, and,  
 behind the dim unknown,  
 Standeth God within the shadow, keep-  
 ing watch above his own.

We see dimly in the Present what is  
 small and what is great,  
 Slow of faith how weak an arm may  
 turn the iron helm of fate,  
 But the soul is still oracular ; amid the  
 market's din,  
 List the ominous stern whisper from the  
 Delphic cave within, —  
 "They enslave their children's children  
 who make compromise with sin."

Slavery, the earth-born Cyclops, feilest  
 of the giant brood,  
 Sons of brutish Force and Darkness, who  
 have drenched the earth with blood,  
 Famished in his self-made desert, blind-  
 ed by our purer day,  
 Gropes in yet unblasted regions for his  
 miserable prey ; —  
 Shall we guide his gory fingers where  
 our helpless children play ?

Then to side with Truth is noble when  
 we share her wretched crust,  
 Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and  
 't is prosperous to be just ;  
 Then it is the brave man chooses, while  
 the coward stands aside,  
 Doubting in his abject spirit, till his  
 Lord is crucified,  
 And the multitude make virtue of the  
 faith they had denied.

Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes, —  
 they were souls that stood alone,  
 While the men they agonized for hurled  
 the contumelious stone,  
 Stood serene, and down the future saw  
 the golden beam incline  
 To the side of perfect justice, mastered  
 by their faith divine,  
 By one man's plain truth to manhood  
 and to God's supreme design.

By the light of burning heretics Christ's  
 bleeding feet I track,  
 Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the  
 cross that turns not back,



And these mounts of anguish number  
 how each generation learned  
 One new word of that grand *Credo* which  
 in prophet-hearts hath burned  
 Since the first man stood God-conquered  
 with his face to heaven upturned.

For Humanity sweeps onward : where  
 to-day the martyr stands,  
 On the morrow crouches Judas with the  
 silver in his hands ;  
 Far in front the cross stands ready and  
 the crackling fagots burn,  
 While the hooting mob of yesterday in  
 silent awe return  
 To glean up the scattered ashes into  
 History's golden urn.

'T is as easy to be heroes as to sit the idle  
 slaves  
 Of a legendary virtue carved upon our  
 fathers' graves,  
 Worshippers of light ancestral make the  
 present light a crime ; —  
 Was the Mayflower launched by cow-  
 ards, steered by men behind their  
 time ?  
 Turn those tracks toward Past or Fu-  
 ture, that make Plymouth Rock  
 sublime ?

They were men of present valor, stalwart  
 old iconoclasts,  
 Unconvinced by axe or gibbet that all  
 virtue was the Past's ;  
 But we make their truth our falsehood,  
 thinking that hath made us free,  
 Hoarding it in mouldy parchments,  
 while our tender spirits flee  
 The rude grasp of that great Impulse  
 which drove them across the sea.

They have rights who dare maintain  
 them ; we are traitors to our sires,  
 Smothering in their holy ashes Freedom's  
 new-lit altar-fires ;  
 Shall we make their creed our jailer ?  
 Shall we, in our haste to slay,  
 From the tombs of the old prophets steal  
 the funeral lamps away  
 To light up the martyr-fagots round the  
 prophets of to-day ?

New occasions teach new duties ; Time  
 makes ancient good uncouth ;  
 They must upward still, and onward,  
 who would keep abreast of Truth ;

Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires ! we  
 ourselves must Pilgrims be,  
 Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly  
 through the desperate winter sea,  
 Nor attempt the Future's portal with  
 the Past's blood-rusted key.

December, 1844.

## AN INDIAN-SUMMER REVERIE.

WHAT visionary tints the year puts  
 on,  
 When falling leaves falter through  
 motionless air  
 Or numbly cling and shiver to be  
 gone !  
 How shimmer the low flats and pas-  
 tures bare,  
 As with her nectar Hebe Autumn fills  
 The bowl between me and those dis-  
 tant hills,  
 And smiles and shakes abroad her misty,  
 tremulous hair !

No more the landscape holds its  
 wealth apart,  
 Making me poorer in my poverty,  
 But mingles with my senses and my  
 heart ;  
 My own projected spirit seems to me  
 In her own reverie the world to  
 steep ;  
 'T is she that waves to sympathetic  
 sleep,  
 Moving, as she is moved, each field and  
 hill and tree.

How fuse and mix, with what un-  
 felt degrees,  
 Clasped by the faint horizon's languid  
 arms,  
 Each into each, the hazy distances !  
 The softened season all the landscape  
 charms ;  
 Those hills, my native village that  
 embay,  
 In waves of dreamier purple roll  
 away,  
 And floating in mirage seem all the  
 glimmering farms.

Far distant sounds the hidden chick-  
 adee  
 Close at my side ; far distant sound  
 the leaves ;  
 The fields seem fields of dream,  
 where Memory

Wanders like gleaning Ruth ; and as  
the sheaves  
Of wheat and barley wavered in the  
eye  
Of Boaz as the maiden's glow went  
by,  
So tremble and seem remote all things  
the sense receives.

The cock's shrill trump that tells  
of scattered corn,  
Passed breezily on by all his flapping  
mates,  
Faint and more faint, from barn to  
barn is borne,  
Southward, perhaps to far Magellan's  
Straits ;  
Dimly I catch the throb of distant  
flails ;  
Silently overhead the hen-hawk  
sails,  
With watchful, measuring eye, and for  
his quarry waits.

The sobered robin, hunger-silent  
now,  
Seeks cedar-berries blue, his autumn  
cheer ;  
The chipmunk, on the shingly shag-  
bark's bough,  
Now saws, now lists with downward  
eye and ear,  
Then drops his nut, and, cheeping,  
with a bound  
Whisks to his winding fastness  
underground ;  
The clouds like swans drift down the  
streaming atmosphere.

O'er yon bare knoll the pointed  
cedar shadows  
Drowse on the crisp, gray moss ; the  
ploughman's call  
Creeps faint as smoke from black,  
fresh-furrowed meadows ;  
The single crow a single caw lets fall ;  
And all around me every bush and  
tree  
Says Autumn's here, and Winter  
soon will be,  
Who snows his soft, white sleep and  
silence over all.

The birch, most shy and ladylike  
of trees,  
Her poverty, as best she may, re-  
trieves,

And hints at her foregone gentili-  
ties  
With some saved relics of her wealth  
of leaves ;  
The swamp-oak, with his royal pur-  
ple on,  
Glares red as blood across the sink-  
ing sun,  
As one who prouder to a falling for-  
tune cleaves.

He looks a sachem, in red blanket  
wrapt,  
Who, mid some council of the sad-  
garbed whites,  
Erect and stern, in his own memo-  
ries lapt,  
With distant eye broods over other  
sights,  
Sees the hushed wood the city's flare  
replace,  
The wounded turf heal o'er the rail-  
way's trace,  
And roams the savage Past of his un-  
dwindled rights.

The red-oak, softer-grained, yields  
all for lost,  
And, with his crumpled foliage stiff  
and dry,  
After the first betrayal of the frost,  
Rebuffs the kiss of the relenting sky ;  
The chestnuts, lavish of their long-  
hid gold,  
To the faint Summer, beggared now  
and old,  
Pour back the sunshine hoarded 'neath  
her favoring eye.

The ash her purple drops forgiv-  
ingly  
And sadly, breaking not the general  
hush ;  
The maple-swamps glow like a sun-  
set sea,  
Each leaf a ripple with its separate  
flush ;  
All round the wood's edge creeps  
the skirting blaze  
Of bushes low, as when, on cloudy  
days,  
Ere the rain fall, the cautious farmer  
burns his brush.

O'er yon low wall, which guards  
one unkempt zone,  
Where vines and weeds and scrub-  
oaks intertwine

Safe from the plough, whose rough,  
discordant stone  
Is massed to one soft gray by lichens  
fine,  
The tangled blackberry, crossed and  
recrossed, weaves  
A prickly network of ensanguined  
leaves ;  
Hard by, with coral beads, the prim  
black-alders shine.

Pillaring with flame this crumbling  
boundary,  
Whose loose blocks topple 'neath the  
ploughboy's foot,  
Who, with each sense shut fast ex-  
cept the eye,  
Creeps close and scares the jay he  
hoped to shoot,  
The woodbine up the elm's straight  
stem aspires,  
Coiling it, harmless, with autumnal  
fires ;  
In the ivy's paler blaze the martyr oak  
stands mute.

Below, the Charles — a stripe of  
nether sky,  
Now hid by rounded apple-trees be-  
tween,  
Whose gaps the misplaced sail  
sweeps bellying by,  
Now flickering golden through a wood-  
land screen,  
Then spreading out, at his next  
turn beyond,  
A silver circle like an inland pond —  
Slips seaward silently through marshes  
purple and green.

Dear marshes ! vain to him the gift  
of sight  
Who cannot in their various incomes  
share,  
From every season drawn, of shade  
and light,  
Who sees in them but levels brown  
and bare ;  
Each change of storm or sunshine  
scatters free  
On them its largess of variety,  
For Nature with cheap means still works  
her wonders rare.

In Spring they lie one broad expanse  
of green,  
O'er which the light winds run with  
glimmering feet :

Here, yellower stripes track out the  
creek unseen,  
There, darker, growths o'er hidden  
ditches meet ;  
And purpler stains show where the  
blossoms crowd,  
As if the silent shadow of a cloud  
Hung there becalmed, with the next  
breath to fleet.

All round, upon the river's slippery  
edge,  
Witching to deeper calm the drowsy  
tide,  
Whispers and leans the breeze-  
entangling sedge ;  
Through emerald glooms the lingering  
waters slide,  
Or, sometimes wavering, throw back  
the sun,  
And the stiff banks in eddies melt  
and run  
Of dimpling light, and with the current  
seem to glide.

In Summer 't is a blithesome sight  
to see,  
As, step by step, with measured swing,  
they pass,  
The wide-ranked mowers wading to  
the knee,  
Their sharp scythes panting through  
the wiry grass ;  
Then, stretched beneath a rick's  
shade in a ring,  
Their nooning take, while one  
begins to sing  
A stave that droops and dies 'neath the  
close sky of brass.

Meanwhile that devil-may-care, the  
bobolink,  
Remembering duty, in mid-quaver  
stops  
Just ere he sweeps o'er rapture's  
tremulous brink,  
And 'twixt the winrows most demurely  
drops,  
A decorous bird of business, who  
provides  
For his brown mate and fledglings  
six besides,  
And looks from right to left, a farmer  
mid his crops.

Another change subdues them in  
the Fall,



But saddens not; they still show mer-  
rier tints,  
Though sober russet seems to cover  
all;  
When the first sunshine through their  
dew-drops glints,  
Look how the yellow clearness,  
streamed across,  
Redeems with rarer hues the season's  
loss,  
As Dawn's feet there had touched and  
left their rosy prints.

Or come when sunset gives its fresh-  
ened zest,  
Lean o'er the bridge and let the ruddy  
thrill,  
While the shorn sun swells down  
the hazy west,  
Glow opposite;—the marshes drink  
their fill  
And swoon with purple veins, then  
slowly fade  
Through pink to brown, as eastward  
moves the shade,  
Lengthening with stealthy creep, of Si-  
mond's darkening hill.

Later, and yet ere Winter wholly  
shuts,  
Ere through the first dry snow the  
runner grates,  
And the loath cart-wheel screams in  
slippery ruts,  
While firmer ice the eager boy awaits,  
Trying each buckle and strap beside  
the fire,  
And until bedtime plays with his  
desire,  
Twenty times putting on and off his new-  
bought skates;—

Then, every morn, the river's banks  
shine bright  
With smooth plate-armor, treacherous  
and frail,  
By the frost's clinking hammers  
forged at night,  
'Gainst which the lances of the sun  
prevail,  
Giving a pretty emblem of the  
day  
When guiltier arms in light shall  
melt away,  
And states shall move free-limbed, loosed  
from war's cramping mail.

And now those waterfalls the ebb-  
ing river  
Twice every day creates on either  
side  
Tinkle, as through their fresh-  
sparred grotts they shiver  
In grass-arched channels to the sun  
denied;  
High flaps in sparkling blue the far-  
heard crow,  
The silvered flats gleam frostily be-  
low,  
Suddenly drops the gull and breaks the  
glassy tide.

But crowned in turn by vying sea-  
sons three,  
Their winter halo hath a fuller ring;  
This glory seems to rest immova-  
bly, —  
The others were too fleet and vanish-  
ing;  
When the hid tide is at its highest  
flow,  
O'er marsh and stream one breath-  
less trance of snow  
With brooding fulness awes and hushes  
everything.

The sunshine seems blown off by  
the bleak wind,  
As pale as formal candles lit by day;  
Gropes to the sea the river dumb and  
blind;  
The brown ricks, snow-thatched by  
the storm in play,  
Show pearly breakers combing o'er  
their lee,  
White crests as of some just en-  
chanted sea,  
Checked in their maddest leap and hang-  
ing poised midway.

But when the eastern blow, with  
rain aslant,  
From mid-sea's prairies green and roll-  
ing plains  
Drives in his wallowing herds of bil-  
lows gaunt,  
And the roused Charles remembers in  
his veins  
Old Ocean's blood and snaps his  
gyves of frost,  
That tyrannous silence on the shores  
is tost  
In dreary wreck, and crumbling desola-  
tion reigns.

Edgewise or flat, in Druid-like de-  
 vice,  
 With leaden pools between or gullies  
 bare,  
 The blocks lie strewn, a bleak Stone-  
 henge of ice ;  
 No life, no sound, to break the grim  
 despair,  
 Save sullen plunge, as through the  
 sedges stiff  
 Down crackles riverward some  
 thaw-sapped cliff,  
 Or when the close-wedged fields of ice  
 crunch here and there.

But let me turn from fancy-pic-  
 tured scenes  
 To that whose pastoral calm before me  
 lies :  
 Here nothing harsh or rugged inter-  
 venes ;  
 The early evening with her misty dyes  
 Smooths off the ravelled edges of  
 the nigh,  
 Relieves the distant with her cooler  
 sky,  
 And tones the landscape down, and  
 soothes the wearied eyes.

There gleams my native village, dear  
 to me,  
 Though higher change's waves each  
 day are seen,  
 Whelming fields famed in boyhood's  
 history,  
 Sanding with houses the diminished  
 green ;  
 There, in red brick, which soften-  
 ing time defies,  
 Stand square and stiff the Muses'  
 factories ; —  
 How with my life knit up is every well-  
 known scene !

Flow on, dear river ! not alone you  
 flow  
 To outward sight, and through your  
 marshes wind ;  
 Fed from the mystic springs of long-  
 ago,  
 Your twin flows silent through my  
 world of mind :  
 Grow dim, dear marshes, in the  
 evening's gray !  
 Before my inner sight ye stretch  
 away,  
 And will forever, though these fleshy  
 eyes grow blind.

Beyond the hillock's house-bespot-  
 ted swell,  
 Where Gothic chapels house the horse  
 and chaise,  
 Where quiet cits in Grecian tem-  
 ples dwell,  
 Where Coptic tombs resound with  
 prayer and praise,  
 Where dust and mud the equal  
 year divide,  
 There gentle Allston lived, and  
 wrought, and died,  
 Transfiguring street and shop with his  
 illumined gaze.

*Virgilium vidi tantum*, — I have  
 seen  
 But as a boy, who looks alike on all,  
 That misty hair, that fine Undine-like  
 mien,  
 Tremulous as down to feeling's faintest  
 call ; —  
 Ah, dear old homestead ! count it to  
 thy fame  
 That thither many times the Paint-  
 er came ; —  
 One elm yet bears his name, a feathery  
 tree and tall.

Swiftly the present fades in mem-  
 ory's glow, —  
 Our only sure possession is the past ;  
 The village blacksmith died a  
 month ago,  
 And dim to me the forge's roaring  
 blast ;  
 Soon fire new mediævals we shall  
 see  
 Oust the black smithy from its chest-  
 nut-tree,  
 And that hewn down, perhaps, the bee-  
 hive green and vast.

How many times, prouder than  
 king on throne,  
 Loosed from the village school-dame's  
 A's and B's,  
 Panting have I the creaky bellows  
 blown,  
 And watched the pent volcano's red  
 increase,  
 Then paused to see the ponderous  
 sledge, brought down  
 By that hard arm voluminous and  
 brown,  
 From the white iron swarm its golden  
 vanishing bees.

Dear native town! whose choking  
 elms each year  
 With eddying dust before their time  
 turn gray,  
 Pining for rain,— to me thy dust is  
 dear;  
 It glorifies the eve of summer day,  
 And when the westerling sun half  
 sunken burns,  
 The mote-thick air to deepest orange  
 turns,  
 The westward horseman rides through  
 clouds of gold away,

So palpable, I've seen those unshorn  
 few,  
 The six old willows at the causey's  
 end  
 (Such trees Paul Potter never  
 dreamed nor drew),  
 Through this dry mist their checker-  
 ing shadows send,  
 Striped, here and there, with many  
 a long-drawn thread,  
 Where streamed through leafy  
 chinks the trembling red,  
 Past which, in one bright trail, the  
 hangbird's flashes blend.

Yes, dearer far thy dust than all  
 that e'er,  
 Beneath the awarded crown of victory,  
 Gilded the blown Olympic chariot-  
 eer;  
 Though lightly prized the ribboned  
 parchments three,  
 Yet *collegisse juvat*, I am glad  
 That here what colleging was mine  
 I had,—  
 It linked another tie, dear native town,  
 with thee!

Nearer art thou than simply native  
 earth,  
 My dust with thine concedes a deeper  
 tie;  
 A closer claim thy soil may well put  
 forth,  
 Something of kindred more than sym-  
 pathy;  
 For in thy bounds I reverently laid  
 away  
 That blinding anguish of forsaken  
 clay,  
 That title I seemed to have in earth and  
 sea and sky,

That portion of my life more choice  
 to me  
 (Though brief, yet in itself so round  
 and whole)  
 Than all the imperfect residue can  
 be;—  
 The Artist saw his statue of the soul  
 Was perfect; so, with one regretful  
 stroke,  
 The earthen model into fragments  
 broke,  
 And without her the impoverished sea-  
 sons roll.

### THE GROWTH OF THE LEGEND.

#### A FRAGMENT.

A LEGEND that grew in the forest's  
 hush  
 Slowly as tear-drops gather and gush,  
 When a word some poet chanced to  
 say  
 Ages ago, in his careless way,  
 Brings our youth back to us out of its  
 shroud  
 Clearly as under yon thunder-cloud  
 I see that white sea-gull. It grew and  
 grew,  
 From the pine-trees gathering a sombre  
 hue,  
 Till it seems a mere murmur out of the  
 vast  
 Norwegian forests of the past;  
 And it grew itself like a true Northern  
 pine,  
 First a little slender line,  
 Like a mermaid's green eyelash, and then  
 anon  
 A stem that a tower might rest upon,  
 Standing spear-straight in the waist-  
 deep moss,  
 Its bony roots clutching around and  
 across,  
 As if they would tear up earth's heart  
 in their grasp  
 Ere the storm should uproot them or  
 make them unclasp;  
 Its cloudy boughs singing, as suiteth the  
 pine,  
 To snow-bearded sea-kings old songs of  
 the brine,  
 Till they straightened and let their  
 staves fall to the floor,  
 Hearing waves moan again on the per-  
 ilous shore



Of Vinland, perhaps, while their prow  
groped its way  
\*Twixt the frothed gnashing tusks of  
some ship-crunching bay.

So, pine-like, the legend grew, strong-  
limbed and tall,  
As the Gypsy child grows that eats crusts  
in the hall;  
It sucked the whole strength of the  
earth and the sky,  
Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter, all  
brought it supply;  
'T was a natural growth, and stood fear-  
lessly there,  
True part of the landscape as sea, land,  
and air;  
For it grew in good times, ere the fash-  
ion it was  
To force these wild births of the woods  
under glass,  
And so, if 't is told as it should be told,  
Though 't were sung under Venice's  
moonlight of gold,  
You would hear the old voice of its  
mother, the pine,  
Murmur sealike and northern through  
every line,  
And the verses should grow, self-sus-  
tained and free,  
Round the vibrating stem of the melody,  
Like the lithe moonlit limbs of the  
parent tree.

Yes, the pine is the mother of legends;  
what food  
For their grim roots is left when the  
thousand-year'd wood,  
The dim-aisled cathedral, whose tall  
arches spring  
Light, sinewy, graceful, firm-set as the  
wing  
From Michael's white shoulder, is hewn  
and defaced  
By iconoclast axes in desperate waste,  
And its wrecks seek the ocean it proph-  
esied long,  
Cassandra-like, crooning its mystical  
song?  
Then the legends go with them,— even  
yet on the sea  
A wild virtue is left in the touch of the  
tree,  
And the sailor's night-watches are  
thrilled to the core  
With the lineal offspring of Odin and  
Thor.

Yes, wherever the pine-wood has never  
let in,  
Since the day of creation, the light and  
the din  
Of manifold life, but has safely con-  
veyed  
From the midnight primeval its armful  
of shade,  
And has kept the weird Past with its  
child-faith alive  
Mid the hum and the stir of To-day's  
busy hive,  
There the legend takes root in the age-  
gathered gloom,  
And its murmurous boughs for their  
sagas find room.

Where Aroostook, far-heard, seems to  
sob as he goes  
Groping down to the sea 'neath his  
mountainous snows;  
Where the lake's froze Sahara of never-  
tracked white,  
When the crack shoots across it, com-  
plains to the night  
With a long, lonely moan, that leagues  
northward is lost,  
As the ice shrinks away from the tread  
of the frost;  
Where the lumberers sit by the log-fires  
that throw  
Their own threatening shadows far round  
o'er the snow,  
When the wolf howls aloof, and the  
wavering glare  
Flashes out from the blackness the eyes  
of the bear,  
When the wood's huge recesses, half-  
lighted, supply  
A canvas where Fancy her mad brush  
may try,  
Blotting in giant Horrors that venture  
not down  
Through the right-angled streets of the  
brisk, whitewashed town,  
But skulk in the depths of the measure-  
less wood  
Mid the Dark's creeping whispers that  
curdle the blood,  
When the eye, glanced in dread o'er the  
shoulder, may dream,  
Ere it shrinks to the camp-fire's compan-  
ioning gleam,  
That it saw the fierce ghost of the Red  
Man crouch back  
To the shroud of the tree-trunk's invin-  
cible black;—

There the old shapes crowd thick round  
 the pine-shadowed camp,  
 Which shun the keen gleam of the scholar's  
 lamp,  
 And the seed of the legend finds true  
 Norland ground,  
 While the border-tale's told and the  
 canteen flits round.

#### A CONTRAST.

THY love thou sentest oft to me,  
 And still as oft I thrust it back;  
 Thy messengers I could not see  
 In those who everything did lack,  
 The poor, the outcast, and the black.

Pride held his hand before mine eyes,  
 The world with flattery stuffed mine  
 ears;

I looked to see a monarch's guise,  
 Nor dreamed thy love would knock  
 for years,  
 Poor, naked, fettered, full of tears.

Yet, when I sent my love to thee,  
 Thou with a smile didst take it in,  
 And entertain'dst it royally,  
 Though grimed with earth, with hun-  
 ger thin,  
 And leprous with the taint of sin.

Now every day thy love I meet,  
 As o'er the earth it wanders wide,  
 With weary step and bleeding feet,  
 Still knocking at the heart of pride  
 And offering grace, though still de-  
 nied.

#### EXTREME UNCTION.

Go! leave me, Priest; my soul would  
 be

Alone with the consoler, Death;  
 Far sadder eyes than thine will see  
 This crumbling clay yield up its  
 breath;

These shrivelled hands have deeper stains  
 Than holy oil can cleanse away,  
 Hands that have plucked the world's  
 coarse gains

As erst they plucked the flowers of  
 May.

Call, if thou canst, to these gray eyes  
 Some faith from youth's traditions  
 wrung;

This fruitless husk which dustward *dries*  
 Hath been a heart once, hath been  
 young;

On this bowed head the awful Past  
 Once laid its consecrating hands;  
 The Future in its purpose vast  
 Paused, waiting my supreme com-  
 mands.

But look! whose shadows block the  
 door?

Who are those two that stand aloof?  
 See! on my hands this freshening gore  
 Writes o'er again its crimson proof!  
 My looked-for death-bed guests are  
 met;

There my dead Youth doth wring its  
 hands,  
 And there, with eyes that goad me yet,  
 The ghost of my Ideal stands!

God bends from out the deep and says,  
 "I gave thee the great gift of life;  
 Wast thou not called in many ways?  
 Are not my earth and heaven at strife?  
 I gave thee of my seed to sow,  
 Bringest thou me my hundred-fold?"  
 Can I look up with face aglow,  
 And answer, "Father, here is gold"?

I have been innocent; God knows  
 When first this wasted life began,  
 Not grape with grape more kindly grows,  
 Than I with every brother-man:  
 Now here I gasp; what lose my kind,  
 When this fast ebbing breath shall  
 part?

What bands of love and service bind  
 This being to a brother heart?

Christ still was wandering o'er the earth  
 Without a place to lay his head;  
 He found free welcome at my hearth,  
 He shared my cup and broke my  
 bread:

Now, when I hear those steps sublime,  
 That bring the other world to this,  
 My snake-turned nature, sunk in slime,  
 Starts sideway with defiant hiss.

Upon the hour when I was born,  
 God said, "Another man shall be,"  
 And the great Maker did not scorn  
 Out of himself to fashion me;  
 He sunned me with his ripening looks,  
 And Heaven's rich instincts in me  
 grew,

As effortless as woodland nooks  
Send violets up and paint them blue.

Yes, I who now, with angry tears,  
Am exiled back to brutish clod,  
Have borne unquenched for fourscore  
years

A spark of the eternal God;  
And to what end? How yield I back  
The trust for such high uses given?  
Heaven's light hath but revealed a track  
Whereby to crawl away from heaven.

Men: think it is an awful sight  
To see a soul just set adrift  
On that drear voyage from whose night  
The ominous shadows never lift;  
But 't is more awful to behold  
A helpless infant newly born,  
Whose little hands unconscious hold  
The keys of darkness and of morn.

Mine held them once; I flung away  
Those keys that might have open set  
The golden sluices of the day,  
But clutch the keys of darkness yet;  
I hear the reapers singing go  
Into God's harvest; I, that might  
With them have chosen, here below  
Grope shuddering at the gates of night.

O glorious Youth, that once wast mine!  
O high Ideal! all in vain  
Ye enter at this ruined shrine  
Whence worship no'er shall rise again;  
The bat and owl inhabit here,  
The snake nests in the altar-stone,  
The sacred vessels moulder near,  
The image of the God is gone.

## THE OAK.

WHAT gnarled stretch, what depth of  
shade, is his!

There needs no crown to mark the  
forest's king;

How in his leaves outshines full sum-  
mer's bliss!

Sun, storm, rain, dew, to him their  
tribute bring,

Which he with such benignant royalty  
Accepts, as overpayeth what is lent;

All nature seems his vassal proud to be,  
And cunning only for his ornament.

How towers he, too, amid 'he billowed  
snows,

An unquelled exile from the summer's  
throne,

Whose plain, unincinctured front more  
kingly shows,

Now that the obscuring courtier leaves  
are flown.

His boughs make music of the winter  
air,

Jewelled with sleet, like some cathed-  
ral front

Where clinging snow-flakes with quaint  
art repair

The diuts and furrows of time's en-  
vious brunt.

How doth his patient strength the rude  
March wind

Persuade to seem glad breaths of sum-  
mer breeze,

And win the soil that fain would be  
unkind,

To swell his revenues with proud in-  
crease!

He is the gem; and all the landscape  
wide

(So doth his grandeur isolate the  
sense)

Seems but the setting, worthless all be-  
side,

An empty socket, were he fallen  
thence.

So, from oft converse with life's wintry  
gales,

Should man learn how to clasp with  
tougher roots

The inspiring earth; how otherwise  
avails

The leaf-creating sap that sunward  
shoots?

So every year that falls with noiseless  
flake

Should fill old scars up on the storm-  
ward side,

And make hoar age revered for age's  
sake,

Not for traditions of youth's leafy  
pride.

So, from the pinched soil of a churlish  
fate,

True hearts compel the sap of stur-  
dier growth,

So between earth and heaven stand sim-  
ply great,



That these shall seem but their attendants both;  
 For nature's forces with obedient zeal  
 Wait on the rooted faith and oaken will;  
 As quickly the pretender's cheat they feel,  
 And turn mad Pucks to flout and mock him still.

Lord! all thy works are lessons; each contains  
 Some emblem of man's all-containing soul;  
 Shall he make fruitless all thy glorious pains,  
 Delving within thy grace an eyeless mole?  
 Make me the least of thy Dodona-grove,  
 Cause me some message of thy truth to bring,  
 Speak but a word through me, nor let thy love  
 Among my boughs disdain to perch and sing.

## AMBROSE.

NEVER, surely, was holier man  
 Than Ambrose, since the world began;  
 With diet spare and raiment thin  
 He shielded himself from the father of sin;  
 With bed of iron and scourgings oft,  
 His heart to God's hand as wax made soft.

Through earnest prayer and watchings long  
 He sought to know 'tween right and wrong,  
 Much wrestling with the blessed Word  
 To make it yield the sense of the Lord,  
 That he might build a storm-proof creed  
 To fold the flock in at their need.

At last he builded a perfect faith,  
 Fenced round about with *The Lord thus saith* :  
 To himself he fitted the doorway's size,  
 Meted the light to the need of his eyes,  
 And knew, by a sure and inward sign,  
 That the work of his fingers was divine.

Then Ambrose said, "All those shall die  
 The eternal death who believe not as I";  
 And some were boiled, some burned in fire,

Some sawn in twain, that his heart's desire,  
 For the good of men's souls, might be satisfied  
 By the drawing of all to the righteous side.

One day, as Ambrose was seeking the truth  
 In his lonely walk, he saw a youth  
 Resting himself in the shade of a tree;  
 It had never been granted him to see  
 So shining a face, and the good man thought  
 'T were pity he should not believe as he ought.

So he set himself by the young man's side,  
 And the state of his soul with questions tried;  
 But the heart of the stranger was hardened indeed,  
 Nor received the stamp of the one true creed;  
 And the spirit of Ambrose waxed sore to find  
 Such features the porch of so narrow a mind.

"As each beholds in cloud and fire  
 The shape that answers his own desire,  
 So each," said the youth, "in the Law shall find  
 The figure and fashion of his mind;  
 And to each in his mercy hath God allowed  
 His several pillar of fire and cloud."

The soul of Ambrose burned with zeal  
 And holy wrath for the young man's weal:  
 "Believest thou then, most wretched youth,"  
 Cried he, "a dividual essence in Truth?  
 I fear me thy heart is too cramped with sin  
 To take the Lord in his glory in."

Now there bubbled beside them where they stood  
 A fountain of waters sweet and good;  
 The youth to the streamlet's brink drew near  
 Saying, "Ambrose, thou maker of creeds, look here!"  
 Six vases of crystal then he took,  
 And set them along the edge of the brook.

“As into these vessels the water I pour,  
There shall one hold less, another more,  
And the water unchanged, in every case,  
Shall put on the figure of the vase ;  
O thou, who wouldst unity make through  
    strife,  
Canst thou fit this sign to the Water of  
    Life ?”

When Ambrose looked up, he stood alone,  
The youth and the stream and the vases  
    were gone ;  
But he knew, by a sense of humbled  
    grace,  
He had talked with an angel face to face,  
And felt his heart change inwardly,  
As he fell on his knees beneath the tree.

ABOVE AND BELOW.

I.

O DWELLERS in the valley-land,  
Who in deep twilight grope and  
    cower,

Till the slow mountain's dial-hand  
Shorten to noon's triumphal hour,  
While ye sit idle, do ye think  
The Lord's great work sits idle too ?  
That light dare not o'erleap the brink  
Of morn, because 't is dark with you ?

Though yet your valleys skulk in night,  
In God's ripe fields the day is cried,  
And reapers, with their sickles bright,  
Troop, singing, down the mountain-  
    side :

Come up, and feel what health there is  
In the frank Dawn's delighted eyes,  
As, bending with a pitying kiss,  
The night-shed tears of Earth she  
    dries !

The Lord wants reapers : O, mount up,  
Before night comes, and says, “Too  
    late !”

Stay not for taking scrip or cup,  
The Master hungers while ye wait ;  
'T is from these heights alone your eyes  
The advancing spears of day can see,  
That o'er the eastern hill-tops rise,  
To break your long captivity.

II.

Lone watcher on the mountain-height,  
It is right precious to behold  
The first long surf of climbing light  
Flood all the thirsty east with gold ;

But we, who in the shadow sit,  
Know also when the day is nigh,  
Seeing thy shining forehead lit  
With his inspiring prophecy.

Thou hast thine office ; we have ours ;  
God lacks not early service here,  
But what are thine eleventh hours  
He counts with us for morning cheer ;  
Our day, for Him, is long enough,  
And when he giveth work to do,  
The bruised reed is amply tough  
To pierce the shield of error through.

But not the less do thou aspire  
Light's earlier messages to preach ;  
Keep back no syllable of fire,  
Plunge deep the rowels of thy speech.  
Yet God deems not thine aëried sight  
More worthy than our twilight dim ;  
For meek Obedience, too, is Light,  
And following that is finding Him.

THE CAPTIVE.

It was past the hour of trysting,  
But she lingered for him still ;  
Like a child, the eager streamlet  
Leaped and laughed adown the hill,  
Happy to be free at twilight  
From its toiling at the mill.

Then the great moon on a sudden  
Ominous, and red as blood,  
Startling as a new creation,  
O'er the eastern hill-top stood,  
Casting deep and deeper shadows  
Through the mystery of the wood.

Dread closed vast and vague about her  
And her thoughts turned fearfully  
To her heart, if there some shelter  
From the silence there might be,  
Like bare cedars leaning inland  
From the blighting of the sea.

Yet he came not, and the stillness  
Dampened round her like a tomb ;  
She could feel cold eyes of spirits  
Looking on her through the gloom,  
She could hear the groping footsteps  
Of some blind, gigantic doom.

Suddenly the silence wavered  
Like a light mist in the wind,  
For a voice broke gently through it,  
Felt like sunshine by the blind,

And the dread, like mist in sunshine,  
Furled serenely from her mind.

"Once my love, my love forever,  
Flesh or spirit, still the same,  
If I failed at time of trysting,  
Deem thou not my faith to blame ;  
I, alas, was made a captive,  
As from Holy Land I came.

"On a green spot in the desert,  
Gleaming like an emerald star,  
Where a palm-tree, in lone silence,  
Yearning for its mate afar,  
Droops above a silver runnel,  
Slender as a scimitar,

"There thou 'lt find the humble postern  
To the castle of my foe ;  
If thy love burn clear and faithful,  
Strike the gateway, green and low,  
Ask to enter, and the warder  
Surely will not say thee no."

Slept again the aspen silence,  
But her loneliness was o'er ;  
Round her soul a motherly patience  
Clasped its arms forevermore ;  
From her heart ebbed back the sorrow,  
Leaving smooth the golden shore.

Donned she now the pilgrim scallop,  
Took the pilgrim staff in hand ;  
Like a cloud-shade, flitting eastward,  
Wandered she o'er sea and land ;  
And her footsteps in the desert  
Fell like cool rain on the sand.

Soon, beneath the palm-tree's shadow,  
Knelt she at the postern low ;  
And thereat she knocked full gently,  
Fearing much the warder's no ;  
All her heart stood still and listened,  
As the door swung backward slow.

There she saw no surly warder  
With an eye like bolt and bar ;  
Through her soul a sense of music  
Throbbled, and, like a guardian Lar,  
On the threshold stood an angel,  
Bright and silent as a star.

Fairest seemed he of God's seraphs,  
And her spirit, lily-wise,  
Opened when he turned upon her  
The deep welcome of his eyes,  
Sending upward to that sunlight  
All its dew for sacrifice.

Then she heard a voice come onward  
Singing with a rapture new  
As Eve heard the songs in Eden,  
Dropping earthward with the dew ;  
Well she knew the happy singer,  
Well the happy song she knew.

Forward leaped she o'er the threshold,  
Eager as a glancing surf ;  
Fell from her the spirit's languor,  
Fell from her the body's scurf ;  
'Neath the palm next day some Arabs  
Found a corpse upon the turf.

#### THE BIRCH-TREE.

RIPPLING through thy branches goes  
the sunshine,  
Among thy leaves that palpitate for-  
ever ;  
Ovid in thee a pining Nymph had pris-  
oned,  
The soul once of some tremulous inland  
river,  
Quivering to tell her woe, but, ah !  
dumb, dumb forever !

While all the forest, witched with slum-  
berous moonshine,  
Holds up its leaves in happy, happy  
stillness,  
Waiting the dew, with breath and pulse  
suspended,  
I hear afar thy whispering, gleamy  
islands,  
And track thee wakeful still amid the  
wide-hung silence.

On the brink of some wood-nestled lake-  
let,  
Thy foliage, like the tresses of a Dryad,  
Dripping round thy slim white stem,  
whose shadow  
Slopes quivering down the water's dusky  
quiet,  
Thou shrink'st as on her bath's edge  
would some startled Naiad.

Thou art the go-between of rustic lovers ;  
Thy white bark has their secrets in its  
keeping ;  
Reuben writes here the happy name of  
Patience,  
And thy lithe boughs hang murmuring  
and weeping  
Above her, as she steals the mystery  
from thy keeping



Thou art to me like my beloved maiden,  
So frankly coy, so full of trembly confi-  
dences;

Thy shadow scarce seems shade, thy  
pattering leaflets  
Sprinkle their gathered sunshine o'er  
my senses,  
And Nature gives me all her summer  
confidences.

Whether my heart with hope or sorrow  
tremble,  
Thou sympathizest still; wild and un-  
quiet,

I fling me down; thy ripple, like a river,  
Flows valleyward, where calmness is,  
and by it

My heart is floated down into the land  
of quiet.

#### AN INTERVIEW WITH MILES STANDISH.

I SAT one evening in my room,  
In that sweet hour of twilight  
When blended thoughts, half light, half  
gloom,

Throng through the spirit's skylight;  
The flames by fits curled round the bars,  
Or up the chimney crinkled,  
While embers dropped like falling stars,  
And in the ashes tinkled.

I sat and mused; the fire burned low,  
And, o'er my senses stealing,  
Crept something of the ruddy glow  
That bloomed on wall and ceiling;  
My pictures (they are very few,  
The heads of ancient wise men)  
Smoothed down their knotted fronts,  
and grew  
As rosy as excisemen.

My antique high-backed Spanish chair  
Felt thrills through wood and leather,  
That had been strangers since whilere,  
'Mid Andalusian heather,  
The oak that built its sturdy frame  
His happy arms stretched over  
The ox whose fortunate hide became  
The botton's polished cover.

It came out in that famous bark,  
That brought our sires intrepid,  
Capacious as another ark  
For furniture decrepit;

For, as that saved of bird and beast  
A pair for propagation,  
So has the seed of these increased  
And furnished half the nation.

Kings sit, they say, in slippery seats;  
But those slant precipices  
Of ice the northern voyager meets  
Less slippery are than this is;  
To cling therein would pass the wit  
Of royal man or woman,  
And whatsoe'er can stay in it  
Is more or less than human.

I offer to all bores this perch,  
Dear well-intentioned people  
With heads as void as week-day church,  
Tongues longer than the steeple;  
To folks with missions, whose gaunt  
eyes  
See golden ages rising, —  
Salt of the earth! in what queer Guys  
Thou'rt fond of crystallizing!

My wonder, then, was not unmixed  
With merciful suggestion,  
When, as my roving eyes grew fixed  
Upon the chair in question,  
I saw its trembling arms enclose  
A figure grim and rusty,  
Whose doublet plain and plainer hose  
Were something worn and dusty.

Now even such men as Nature forms  
Merely to fill the street with,  
Once turned to ghosts by hungry worms,  
Are serious things to meet with;  
Your penitent spirits are no jokes,  
And, though I'm not averse to  
A quiet shade, even they are folks  
One cares not to speak first to.

Who knows, thought I, but he has come,  
By Charon kindly ferried,  
To tell me of a mighty sum  
Behind my wainscot buried?  
There is a buccaneerish air  
About that garb outlandish —  
Just then the ghost drew up his chair  
And said, "My name is Standish.

"I come from Plymouth, deadily bored  
With toasts, and songs, and speeches,  
As long and flat as my old sword,  
As threadbare as my breeches:  
They understand us Pilgrims! they,  
Smooth men with rosy faces,

Strength's knots and gnarls all pared  
away,  
And varnish in their places!

"We had some toughness in our grain,  
The eye to rightly see us is  
Not just the one that lights the brain  
Of drawing-room Tyrtæuses:  
*They* talk about their Pilgrim blood,  
Their birthright high and holy!  
A mountain-stream that ends in mud  
Methinks is melancholy.

"He had stiff knees, the Puritan,  
That were not good at bending;  
The homespun dignity of man  
He thought was worth defending;  
He did not, with his pinchbeck ore,  
His country's shame forgotten,  
Gild Freedom's coffin o'er and o'er,  
When all within was rotten.

"These loud ancestral boasts of yours,  
How can they else than vex us?  
Where were your dinner orators  
When slavery grasped at Texas?  
Dumb on his knees was every one  
That now is bold as Cæsar;  
Mere pegs to hang an office on  
Such stalwart men as these are."

"Good sir," I said, "you seem much  
stirred;  
The sacred compromises —"  
"Now God confound the dastard word!  
My gall thereat arises:  
Northward it hath this sense alone,  
That you, your conscience blinding,  
Shall bow your fool's nose to the stone,  
When slavery feels like grinding.

"'T is shame to see such painted sticks  
In Vane's and Winthrop's places,  
To see your spirit of Seventy-six  
Drag humbly in the traces,  
With slavery's lash upon her back,  
And herds of office-holders  
To shout applause, as, with a crack,  
It peels her patient shoulders.

"*We* forefathers to such a rout! —  
No, by my faith in God's word!"  
Half rose the ghost, and half drew out  
The ghost of his old broadsword,  
Then thrust it slowly back again,  
And said, with reverent gesture,

"No, Freedom, no! blood should not  
stain  
The hem of thy white vesture.

"I feel the soul in me draw near  
The mount of prophesying;  
In this bleak wilderness I hear  
A John the Baptist crying;  
Far in the east I see upleap  
The streaks of first forewarning,  
And they who sowed the light shall reap  
The golden sheaves of morning.

"Child of our travail and our woe,  
Light in our day of sorrow,  
Through my rapt spirit I foreknow  
The glory of thy morrow;  
I hear great steps, that through the shade  
Draw nigher still and nigher,  
And voices call like that which bade  
The prophet come up higher."

I looked, no form mine eyes could find,  
I heard the red cock crowing,  
And through my window-chinks the  
wind  
A dismal tune was blowing;  
Thought I, My neighbor Buckingham  
Hath somewhat in him gritty,  
Some Pilgrim-stuff that hates all sham,  
And he will print my ditty.

#### ON THE CAPTURE OF FUGITIVE SLAVES NEAR WASHINGTON.

LOOK on who will in apathy, and stifle  
they who can,  
The sympathies, the hopes, the words,  
that make man truly man;  
Let those whose hearts are dungeoned  
up with interest or with ease  
Consent to hear with quiet pulse of  
loathsome deeds like these!

I first drew in New England's air, and  
from her hardy breast  
Sucked in the tyrant-hating milk that  
will not let me rest;  
And if my words seem treason to the  
dullard and the tame,  
'T is but my Bay-State dialect, — our  
fathers spake the same!

Shame on the costly mockery of piling  
stone on stone  
To those who won our liberty, the heroes  
dead and gone,

While we look coldly on and see law-  
shielded ruffians slay  
The men who fain would win their own,  
the heroes of to-day !

Are we pledged to craven silence ? O,  
fling it to the wind,  
The parchment wall that bars us from  
the least of human kind,  
That makes us cringe and temporize,  
and dumbly stand at rest,  
While Pity's burning flood of words is  
red-hot in the breast !

Though we break our fathers' promise,  
we have nobler duties first ;  
The traitor to Humanity is the traitor  
most accursed ;  
Man is more than Constitutions ; better  
rot beneath the sod,  
Than be true to Church and State while  
we are doubly false to God !

We owe allegiance to the State ; but  
deeper, truer, more,  
To the sympathies that God hath set  
within our spirit's core ;  
Our country claims our fealty ; we grant  
it so, but then  
Before Man made us citizens, great  
Nature made us men.

He's true to God who's true to man ;  
wherever wrong is done,  
To the humblest and the weakest, 'neath  
the all-beholding sun,  
That wrong is also done to us ; and they  
are slaves most base,  
Whose love of right is for themselves,  
and not for all their race.

God works for all. Ye cannot hem the  
hope of being free  
With parallels of latitude, with moun-  
tain-range or sea.  
Put golden padlocks on Truth's lips, be  
callous as ye will,  
From soul to soul, o'er all the world,  
leaps one electric thrill.

Chain down your slaves with ignorance,  
ye cannot keep apart,  
With all your craft of tyranny, the hu-  
man heart from heart :  
When first the Pilgrims landed on the  
Bay State's iron shore,  
The word went forth that slavery should  
one day be no more.

Out from the land of bondage 't is de-  
creed our slaves shall go,  
And signs to us are offered, as erst to  
Pharaoh ;

If we are blind, their exodus, like Is-  
rael's of yore,  
Through a Red Sea is doomed to be,  
whose surges are of gore.

'T is ours to save our brethren, with  
peace and love to win  
Their darkened hearts from error, ere  
they harden it to sin ;  
But if before his duty man with listless  
spirit stands,  
Erelong the Great Avenger takes the  
work from out his hands.

## TO THE DANDELION.

DEAR common flower, that grow'st  
beside the way,  
Fringing the dusty road with harmless  
gold,

First pledge of blithesome May,  
Which children pluck, and, full of pride  
uphold,  
High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed  
that they

An Eldorado in the grass have found,  
Which not the rich earth's ample  
round

May match in wealth, thou art more  
dear to me

Than all the prouder summer-blooms  
may be.

Gold such as thine ne'er drew the  
Spanish prow  
Through the primeval hush of Indian  
seas,

Nor wrinkled the lean brow  
Of age, to rob the lover's heart of ease ;  
'T is the Spring's largess, which she  
scatters now

To rich and poor alike, with lavish hand,  
Though most hearts never under-  
stand

To take it at God's value, but pass by  
The offered wealth with unrewarded  
eye.

Thou art my tropics and mine Italy ;  
To look at thee unlocks a warmer clime ;  
The eyes thou givest me  
Are in the heart, and heed not space or  
time :



Not in mid June the golden-cui-  
rased bee  
Feels a more summer-like warm ravish-  
ment  
In the white lily's breezy tent,  
His fragrant Sybaris, than I, when  
first  
From the dark green thy yellow cir-  
cles burst.

Then think I of deep shadows on the  
grass,  
Of meadows where in sun the cattle  
graze,  
Where, as the breezes pass,  
The gleaming rushes lean a thousand  
ways,  
Of leaves that slumber in a cloudy  
mass,  
Or whiten in the wind, of waters blue  
That from the distance sparkle  
through  
Some woodland gap, and of a sky  
above,  
Where one white cloud like a stray  
lamb doth move.

My childhood's earliest thoughts are  
linked with thee;  
The sight of thee calls back the robin's  
song,  
Who, from the dark old tree  
Beside the door, sang clearly all day  
long,  
And I, secure in childish piety,  
Listened as if I heard an angel sing  
With news from heaven, which he  
could bring  
Fresh every day to my untainted  
ears  
When birds and flowers and I were  
happy peers.

How like a prodigal doth nature seem,  
When thou, for all thy gold, so common  
art!  
Thou teachest me to deem  
More sacredly of every human heart,  
Since each reflects in joy its scanty  
gleam  
Of heaven, and could some wondrous  
secret show,  
Did we but pay the love we owe,  
And with a child's undoubting wis-  
dom look  
On all these living pages of God's  
book.

## THE GHOST-SEER.

YE who, passing graves by night,  
Glance not to the left nor right,  
Lest a spirit should arise,  
Cold and white, to freeze your eyes,  
Some weak phantom, which your doubt  
Shapes upon the dark without  
From the dark within, a guest  
At the spirit's deathlessness,  
Which ye entertain with fear  
In your self-built dungeon here,  
Where ye sell your God-given lives  
Just for gold to buy you gyves,—  
Ye without a shudder meet  
In the city's noonday street,  
Spirits sadder and more dread  
Than from out the clay have fled,  
Buried, beyond hope of light,  
In the body's haunted night!

See ye not that woman pale?  
There are bloodhounds on her trail!  
Bloodhounds two, all gaunt and lean,  
(For the soul their scent is keen,)  
Want and Sin, and Sin is last,  
They have followed far and fast;  
Want gave tongue, and, at her howl,  
Sin awakened with a growl.  
Ah, poor girl! she had a right  
To a blessing from the light;  
Title-deeds to sky and earth  
God gave to her at her birth;  
But, before they were enjoyed,  
Poverty had made them void,  
And had drunk the sunshine up  
From all nature's ample cup,  
Leaving her a first-born's share  
In the dregs of darkness there.  
Often, on the sidewalk bleak,  
Hungry, all alone, and weak,  
She has seen, in night and storm,  
Rooms o'erflow with firelight warm,  
Which, outside the window-glass,  
Doubled all the cold, alas!  
Till each ray that on her fell  
Stabbed her like an icicle,  
And she almost loved the wail  
Of the bloodhounds on her trail.  
Till the floor becomes her bier,  
She shall feel their pantings near,  
Close upon her very heels,  
Spite of all the din of wheels;  
Shivering on her pallet poor,  
She shall hear them at the door  
Whine and scratch to be let in,  
Sister bloodhounds, Want and Sin!

Hark ! that rustle of a dress,  
Stiff with lavish costliness !  
Here comes one whose cheek would  
flush

But to have her garment brush  
'Gainst the girl whose fingers thin  
Wove the weary broidery in,  
Bending backward from her toil,  
Jest her tears the silk might soil,  
And, in midnights chill and murk,  
Stitched her life into the work,  
Shaping from her bitter thought  
Heart's-ease and forget-me-not,  
Satirizing her despair  
With the emblems woven there.  
Little doth the wearer heed  
Of the heart-break in the brede ;  
A hyena by her side  
Skulks, down-looking, — it is Pride.  
He digs for her in the earth,  
Where lie all her claims of birth,  
With his foul paws rooting o'er  
Some long-buried ancestor,  
Who, perhaps, a statue won  
By the ill deeds he had done,  
By the innocent blood he shed,  
By the desolation spread  
Over happy villages,  
Blotting out the smile of peace.

There walks Judas, he who sold  
Yesterday his Lord for gold,  
Sold God's presence in his heart  
For a proud step in the mart ;  
He hath dealt in flesh and blood ;  
At the bank his name is good ;  
At the bank, and only there,  
'T is a marketable ware.  
In his eyes that stealthy gleam  
Was not learned of sky or stream,  
But it has the cold, hard glint  
Of new dollars from the mint.  
Open now your spirit's eyes,  
Look through that poor clay disguise  
Which has thickened, day by day,  
Till it keeps all light at bay,  
And his soul in pitchy gloom  
Gropes about its narrow tomb,  
From whose dank and slimy walls  
Drop by drop the horror falls.  
Look ! a serpent lank and cold  
Hugs his spirit fold on fold ;  
From his heart, all day and night,  
It doth suck God's blessed light.  
Drink it will, and drink it must,  
Till the cup holds naught but dust ;  
All day long he hears it hiss,

Writhing in its fiendish bliss ;  
All night long he sees its eyes  
Flicker with foul ecstasies,  
As the spirit ebbs away  
Into the absorbing clay.

Who is he that skulks, afraid  
Of the trust he has betrayed,  
Shuddering if perchance a gleam  
Of old nobleness should stream  
Through the pent, unwholesome room,  
Where his shrunk soul cowers in  
gloom,

Spirit sad beyond the rest  
By more instinct for the best ?  
'T is a poet who was sent  
For a bad world's punishment,  
By compelling it to see  
Golden glimpses of To Be,  
By compelling it to hear  
Songs that prove the angels near ;  
Who was sent to be the tongue  
Of the weak and spirit-wrung,  
Whence the fiery-winged Despair  
In men's shrinking eyes might flare.  
'T is our hope doth fashion us  
To base use or glorious :  
He who might have been a lark  
Of Truth's morning, from the dark  
Raining down melodious hope  
Of a freer, broader scope,  
Aspirations, prophecies,  
Of the spirit's full sunrise,  
Chose to be a bird of night,  
That, with eyes refusing light,  
Hooted from some hollow tree  
Of the world's idolatry.  
'T is his punishment to hear.  
Sweep of eager pinions near,  
And his own vain wings to feel  
Drooping downward to his heel,  
All their grace and import lost,  
Burdening his weary ghost :  
Ever walking by his side  
He must see his angel guide,  
Who at intervals doth turn  
Looks on him so sadly stern,  
With such ever-new surprise  
Of hushed anguish in her eyes,  
That it seems the light of day  
From around him shrinks away,  
Or drops blunted from the wall  
Built around him by his fall.  
Then the mountains, whose white peaks  
Catch the morning's earliest streaks,  
He must see, where prophets sit,  
Turning east their faces lit,

Whence, with footsteps beautiful,  
To the earth, yet dim and dull,  
They the gladsome tidings bring  
Of the sunlight's hastening:  
Never can these hills of bliss  
Be o'erclimbed by feet like his!

But enough! O, do not dare  
From the next the veil to tear,  
Woven of station, trade, or dress,  
More obscene than nakedness,  
Wherewith plausible culture drapes  
Fallen Nature's myriad shapes!  
Let us rather love to mark  
How the unextinguished spark  
Still gleams through the thin disguise  
Of our customs, pomps, and lies,  
And, not seldom blown to flame,  
Vindicate its ancient claim.

#### STUDIES FOR TWO HEADS.

##### I.

SOME sort of heart I know is hers, —  
I chanced to feel her pulse one night;  
A brain she has that never errs,  
And yet is never nobly right;  
It does not leap to great results,  
But, in some corner out of sight,  
Suspects a spot of latent blight,  
And, o'er the impatient infinite,  
She bargains, haggles, and consults.

Her eye, — it seems a chemic test  
And drops upon you like an acid;  
It bites you with unconscious zest,  
So clear and bright, so coldly placid;  
It holds you quietly aloof,  
It holds, — and yet it does not win  
you;  
It merely puts you to the proof  
And sorts what qualities are in you;  
It smiles, but never brings you nearer,  
It lights, — her nature draws not nigh;  
'T is but that yours is growing clearer  
To her assays; — yes, try and try,  
You'll get no deeper than her eye.

There, you are classified: she's gone  
Far, far away into herself;  
Each with its Latin label on,  
Your poor components, one by one,  
Are laid upon their proper shelf  
In her compact and ordered mind,  
And what of you is left behind  
Is no more to her than the wind;

In that clear brain, which, day and  
night,

No movement of the heart e'er jostles,  
Her friends are ranged on left and  
right, —

Here, silex, hornblende, sienite;  
There, animal remains and fossils.

And yet, O subtle analyst,  
That canst each property detect  
Of mood or grain, that canst untwist  
Each tangled skein of intellect,  
And with thy scalpel eyes lay bare  
Each mental nerve more fine than air, —  
O brain exact, that in thy scales  
Canst weigh the sun and never err,  
For once thy patient science fails,  
One problem still defies thy art; —  
Thou never canst compute for her  
The distance and diameter  
Of any simple human heart.

##### II.

HEAR him but speak, and you will feel  
The shadows of the Portico  
Over your tranquil spirit steal,  
To modulate all joy and woe  
To one subdued, subduing glow;  
Above our squabbling business-hours,  
Like Phidian Jove's, his beauty lowers,  
His nature satirizes ours;  
A form and front of Attic grace,  
He shames the higgling market-place,  
And dwarfs our more mechanic powers.

What throbbing verse can fitly render  
That face so pure, so trembling-tender?

Sensation glimmers through its rest,  
It speaks unmanacled by words,  
As full of motion as a nest  
That palpitates with unfledged birds;  
'T is likeliest to Bethesda's stream,  
Forewarned through all its thrilling  
springs,

White with the angel's coming gleam,  
And rippled with his fanning wings.

Hear him unfold his plots and plans,  
And larger destinies seem man's;  
You conjure from his glowing face  
The omen of a fairer race;  
With one grand trope he boldly spans  
The gulf wherein so many fall,  
'Twixt possible and actual;  
His first swift word, talaria-shod,  
Exuberant with conscious God,



Out of the choir of planets blots  
The present earth with all its spots.

Himself unshaken as the sky,  
His words, like whirlwinds, spin on  
high

Systems and creeds pellmell together;  
'T is strange as to a deaf man's eye,  
While trees uprooted splinter by,  
The dumb turmoil of stormy weather;  
Less of iconoclast than shaper,  
His spirit, safe behind the reach  
Of the tornado of his speech,  
Burns calmly as a glowworm's ta-  
per.

So great in speech, but, ah! in act  
So overrun with vermin troubles,  
The coarse, sharp-cornered, ugly fact  
Of life collapses all his bubbles:  
Had he but lived in Plato's day,  
He might, unless my fancy errs,  
Have shared that golden voice's sway  
O'er barefooted philosophers.

Our nipping climate hardly suits  
The ripening of ideal fruits:  
His theories vanquish us all summer,  
But winter makes him dumb and  
dumber;

To see him mid life's needful things  
Is something painfully bewildering;  
He seems an angel with clipt wings  
Tied to a mortal wife and children,  
And by a brother seraph taken  
In the act of eating eggs and bacon.  
Like a clear fountain, his desire  
Exults and leaps toward the light,

In every drop it says "Aspire!"  
Striving for more ideal height;  
And as the fountain, falling thence,  
Crawls baffled through the common  
gutter,

So, from his speech's eminence,  
He shrinks into the present tense,  
Unkinged by foolish bread and butter.

Yet smile not, worldling, for in deeds  
Not all of life that's brave and wise  
is;

He strews an ampler future's seeds,  
'T is your fault if no harvest rises;  
Smooth back the sneer; for is it naught  
That all he is and has is Beauty's?  
By soul the soul's gains must be wrought,  
The Actual claims our coarser thought,  
The Ideal hath its higher duties.

## ON A PORTRAIT OF DANTE BY GIOTTO.

CAN this be thou who, lean and pale,  
With such immitigable eye  
Didst look upon those writhing souls in  
bale,

And note each vengeance, and pass by  
Unmoved, save when thy heart by chance  
Cast backward one forbidden glance,  
And saw Francesca, with child's glee,  
Subdue and mount thy wild-horse knee  
And with proud hands control its fiery  
prance?

With half-drooped lids, and smooth,  
round brow,

And eye remote, that inly sees  
Fair Beatrice's spirit wandering now  
In some sea-lulled Hesperides,  
Thou movest through the jarring street,  
Secluded from the noise of feet  
By her gift-blossom in thy hand,  
Thy branch of palm from Holy  
Land;—

No trace is here of ruin's fiery sleet.

Yet there is something round thy lips  
That prophesies the coming doom,  
The soft, gray herald-shadow ere the  
eclipse

Notches the perfect disk with gloom;  
A something that would banish thee,  
And thine untamed pursuer be,  
From men and their unworthy fates,  
Though Florence had not shut her  
gates,

And Grief had loosed her clutch and let  
thee free.

Ah! he who follows fearlessly  
The beckonings of a poet-heart  
Shall wander, and without the world's  
decree,

A banished man in field and mart;  
Harder than Florence' walls the bar  
Which with deaf sternness holds him  
far

From home and friends, till death's  
release,

And makes his only prayer for peace,  
Like thine, scarred veteran of a lifelong  
war!

## ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND'S CHILD.

DEATH never came so nigh to me before,  
Nor showed me his mild face: oft had I  
mused

Of calm and peace and safe forgetfulness,  
 Of folded hands, closed eyes, and heart at rest,  
 And slumber sound beneath a flowery turf,  
 Of faults forgotten, and an inner place kept sacred for us in the heart of friends;  
 But these were idle fancies, satisfied with the mere husk of this great mystery,  
 And dwelling in the outward shows of things.  
 Heaven is not mounted to on wings of dreams,  
 Nor doth the unthankful happiness of youth aim thitherward, but floats from bloom to bloom,  
 With earth's warm patch of sunshine well content:  
 'T is sorrow builds the shining ladder up, whose golden rounds are our calamities, whereon our firm feet planting, nearer God  
 The spirit climbs, and hath its eyes unsealed.

True is it that Death's face seems stern and cold,  
 When he is sent to summon those we love,  
 But all God's angels come to us disguised;  
 Sorrow and sickness, poverty and death, one after other lift their frowning masks,  
 And we behold the seraph's face beneath, all radiant with the glory and the calm of having looked upon the front of God. With every anguish of our earthly part the spirit's sight grows clearer; this was meant  
 When Jesus touched the blind man's lids with clay.  
 Life is the jailer, Death the angel sent to draw the unwilling bolts and set us free.  
 He flings not ope the ivory gate of Rest, —  
 Only the fallen spirit knocks at that, — but to benigner regions beckons us, to destinies of more rewarded toil.  
 In the hushed chamber, sitting by the dead,  
 It grates on us to hear the flood of life

Whirl rustling onward, senseless of our loss.  
 The bee hums on; around the blossomed vine  
 Whirs the light humming-bird; the cricket chirps;  
 The locust's shrill alarm stings the ear;  
 Hard by, the cock shouts lustily; from farm to farm,  
 His cheery brothers, telling of the sun, answer, till far away the joyance dies: we never knew before how God had filled  
 The summer air with happy living sounds;  
 All round us seems an overplus of life, and yet the one dear heart lies cold and still.  
 It is most strange, when the great miracle  
 Hath for our sakes been done, when we have had  
 Our inwardest experience of God, when with his presence still the room expands,  
 And is awed after him, that naught is changed,  
 That Nature's face looks unacknowledging,  
 And the mad world still dances heedless on  
 After its butterflies, and gives no sign. 'T is hard at first to see it all aright: in vain Faith blows her trump to summon back  
 Her scattered troop: yet, through the clouded glass  
 Of our own bitter tears, we learn to look undazzled on the kindness of God's face;  
 Earth is too dark, and Heaven alone shines through.

It is no little thing, when a fresh soul and a fresh heart, with their unmeasured scope  
 For good, not gravitating earthward yet, but circling in diviner periods, are sent into the world, — no little thing,  
 When this unbounded possibility into the outer silence is withdrawn. Ah, in this world, where every guiding thread  
 Ends suddenly in the one sure centre, death,

The visionary hand of Might-have-been  
Alone can fill Desire's cup to the brim !

How changed, dear friend, are thy part  
and thy child's !

He bends above *thy* cradle now, or holds  
His warning finger out to be thy guide ;  
Thou art the nursling now ; he watches  
thee

Slow learning, one by one, the secret  
things

Which are to him used sights of every  
day ;

He smiles to see thy wondering glances  
con

The grass and pebbles of the spirit-  
world,

To thee miraculous ; and he will teach  
Thy knees their due observances of  
prayer.

Children are God's apostles, day by day  
Sent forth to preach of love, and hope,  
and peace ;

Nor hath thy babe his mission left un-  
done.

To me, at least, his going hence hath  
given

Serenest thoughts and nearer to the skies,  
And opened a new fountain in my heart  
For thee, my friend, and all : and O, if  
Death

More near approaches meditates, and  
clasps

Even now some dearer, more reluctant  
hand,

God, strengthen thou my faith, that I  
may see

That 't is thine angel, who, with loving  
haste,

Unto the service of the inner shrine,  
Doth waken thy beloved with a kiss.

### EURYDICE.

HEAVEN'S cup held down to me I  
drain,

The sunshine mounts and spurs my  
brain ;

Bathing in grass, with thirsty eye  
I suck the last drop of the sky ;  
With each hot sense I draw to the lees  
The quickening out-door influences,  
And empty to each radiant comer  
A supernaculum of summer :

Not, Bacchus, all thy grosser juice  
Could bring enchantment so profuse,

Though for its press each grape-bunch had  
The white feet of an Oread.

Through our coarse art gleam, now and  
then,

The features of angelic men :  
'Neath the lewd Satyr's veiling paint  
Gloweth the Sibyl, Muse, or Saint ;  
The dauber's botch no more obscures  
The mighty master's portraiture.  
And who can say what luckier beam  
The hidden glory shall redeem,  
For what chance clog the soul may wait  
To stumble on its nobler fate,  
Or why, to his unwarned abode,  
Still by surprises comes the God ?  
Some moment, nailed on sorrow's cross,  
May mediate a whole youth's loss,  
Some windfall joy, we know not whence,  
Redeem a lifetime's rash expense,  
And, suddenly wise, the soul may mark,  
Stripped of their simulated dark,  
Mountains of gold that pierce the sky,  
Girdling its valleyed poverty.

I feel ye, childhood's hopes, return,  
With olden heats my pulses burn, —  
Mine be the self-forgetting sweep,  
The torrent impulse swift and wild,  
Wherewith Taghkanic's rockborn child  
Dares gloriously the dangerous leap,  
And, in his sky-descended mood,  
Transmutes each drop of sluggish blood,  
By touch of bravery's simple wand,  
To amethyst and diamond,  
Proving himself no bastard slip,  
But the true granite-cradled one,  
Nursed with the rock's primeval drip,  
The cloud-embracing mountain's son !

Prayer breathed in vain ! no wish's sway  
Rebuilds the vanished yesterday ;  
For plated wares of Sheffield stamp  
We gave the old Aladdin's lamp ;  
'T is we are changed ; ah, whither went  
That undesigned abandonment,  
That wise, unquestioning content,  
Which could erect its microcosm  
Out of a weed's neglected blossom,  
Could call up Arthur and his peers  
By a low moss's clump of spears,  
Or, in its shingle trireme launched,  
Where Charles in some green inlet  
branched,

Could venture for the golden fleece  
And dragon-watched Hesperides,  
Or, from its ripple-shattered fate,



Ulysses' chances re-create ?  
 When, heralding life's every phase,  
 There glowed a goddess-veiling haze,  
 A plenteous, forewarning grace,  
 Like that more tender dawn that flies  
 Before the full moon's ample rise ?  
 Methinks thy parting glory shines  
 Through yonder grove of singing pines ;  
 At that elm-vista's end I trace  
 Dimly thy sad leave-taking face,  
 Eurydice ! Eurydice !  
 The tremulous leaves repeat to me  
 Eurydice ! Eurydice !  
 No gloomier Orcus swallows thee  
 Than the unclouded sunset's glow ;  
 Thine is at least Elysian woe ;  
 Thou hast Good's natural decay,  
 And fadest like a star away  
 Into an atmosphere whose shine  
 With fuller day o'ermasters thine,  
 Entering defeat as 't were a shrine ;  
 For us, — we turn life's diary o'er  
 To find but one word, — Nevermore.

#### SHE CAME AND WENT.

As a twig trembles, which a bird  
 Lights on to sing, then leaves unbent,  
 So is my memory thrilled and stirred ;—  
 I only know she came and went.

As clasps some lake, by gusts unriven,  
 The blue dome's measureless content,  
 So my soul held that moment's heaven ;—  
 I only know she came and went.

As, at one bound, our swift spring heaps  
 The orchards full of bloom and scent,  
 So clove her May my wintry sleeps ;—  
 I only know she came and went.

An angel stood and met my gaze,  
 Through the low doorway of my tent ;  
 The tent is struck, the vision stays ;—  
 I only know she came and went.

O, when the room grows slowly dim,  
 And life's last oil is nearly spent,  
 One gush of light these eyes will brim,  
 Only to think she came and went.

#### THE CHANGELING.

I HAD a little daughter,  
 And she was given to me  
 To lead me gently backward  
 To the Heavenly Father's knee,

That I, by the force of nature,  
 Might in some dim wise divine  
 The depth of his infinite patience  
 To this wayward soul of mine.

I know not how others saw her,  
 But to me she was wholly fair,  
 And the light of the heaven she came  
 from  
 Still lingered and gleamed in her hair ;  
 For it was as wavy and golden,  
 And as many changes took,  
 As the shadows of sun-gilt ripples  
 On the yellow bed of a brook.

To what can I liken her smiling  
 Upon me, her kneeling lover,  
 How it leaped from her lips to her eye-  
 lids,  
 And dimpled her wholly over,  
 Till her outstretched hands smiled also,  
 And I almost seemed to see  
 The very heart of her mother  
 Sending sun through her veins to me !

She had been with us scarce a twelve-  
 month,

And it hardly seemed a day,  
 When a troop of wandering angels  
 Stole my little daughter away ;  
 Or perhaps those heavenly Zingari  
 But loosed the hampering strings,  
 And when they had opened her cage-  
 door,  
 My little bird used her wings.

But they left in her stead a changeling,  
 A little angel child,  
 That seems like her bud in full blossom,  
 And smiles as she never smiled :  
 When I wake in the morning, I see it  
 Where she always used to lie,  
 And I feel as weak as a violet  
 Alone 'neath the awful sky.

As weak, yet as trustful also ;  
 For the whole year long I see  
 All the wonders of faithful Nature  
 Still worked for the love of me ;  
 Winds wander, and dews drip earthward,  
 Rain falls, suns rise and set,  
 Earth whirls, and all but to prosper  
 A poor little violet.

This child is not mine as the first was,  
 I cannot sing it to rest,  
 I cannot lift it up fatherly  
 And bliss it upon my breast ;

Yet it lies in my little one's cradle  
 And sits in my little one's chair,  
 And the light of the heaven she's gone to  
 Transfigures its golden hair.

## THE PIONEER.

WHAT man would live coffined with  
 brick and stone,  
 Imprisoned from the healing touch of  
 air,  
 And cramped with selfish landmarks  
 everywhere,  
 When all before him stretches, furrow-  
 less and lone,  
 The unmapped prairie none can fence  
 or own?

What man would read and read the  
 selfsame faces,  
 And, like the marbles which the  
 windmill grinds,  
 Rub smooth forever with the same  
 smooth minds,  
 This year retracing last year's, every  
 year's, dull traces,  
 When there are woods and un-pen-  
 folded spaces?

What man o'er one old thought would  
 pore and pore,  
 Shut like a book between its covers  
 thin  
 For every fool to leave his dog's-  
 ears in,  
 When solitude is his, and God forever-  
 more,  
 Just for the opening of a paltry door?

What man would watch life's oozy  
 element  
 Creep Letheward forever, when he  
 might  
 Down some great river drift beyond  
 men's sight,  
 To where the undethroned forest's royal  
 tent  
 Broods with its hush o'er half a con-  
 tinent?

What man with men would push and  
 altercate,  
 Piecing out crooked means to  
 crooked ends,  
 When he can have the skies and  
 woods for friends,

Snatch back the rudder of his undis-  
 mantled fate,  
 And in himself be ruler, church, and  
 state?

Cast leaves and feathers rot in last  
 year's nest,  
 The winged brood, flown thence,  
 new dwellings plan;  
 The serf of his own Past is not a  
 man;

To change and change is life, to move  
 and never rest;—  
 Not what we are, but what we hope,  
 is best.

The wild, free woods make no man  
 halt or blind;  
 Cities rob men of eyes and hands  
 and feet,  
 Patching one whole of many incom-  
 plete;

The general preys upon the individual  
 mind,  
 And each alone is helpless as the wind.

Each man is some man's servant;  
 every soul  
 Is by some other's presence quite  
 discrowned;

Each owes the next through all the  
 imperfect round,  
 Yet not with mutual help; each man is  
 his own goal,  
 And the whole earth must stop to pay  
 him toll.

Here, life the undiminished man de-  
 mands;  
 New faculties stretch out to meet  
 new wants;  
 What Nature asks, that Nature also  
 grants;

Here man is lord, not drudge, of eyes  
 and feet and hands,  
 And to his life is knit with hourly  
 bands.

Come out, then, from the old thoughts  
 and old ways,  
 Before you harden to a crystal cold  
 Which the new life can shatter, but  
 not mould;

Freedom for you still waits, still, look-  
 ing backward, stays,  
 But widens still the irretrievable  
 space.

## LONGING.

Of all the myriad moods of mind  
That through the soul come thronging,  
Which one was e'er so dear, so kind,  
So beautiful as Longing?  
The thing we long for, that we are  
For one transcendent moment,  
Before the Present poor and bare  
Can make its sneering comment.

Still, through our paltry stir and strife,  
Glow down the wished Ideal,  
And Longing moulds in clay what Life  
Carves in the marble Real;  
To let the new life in, we know,  
Desire must ope the portal;  
Perhaps the longing to be so  
Helps make the soul immortal.

Longing is God's fresh heavenward will  
With our poor earthward striving;  
We quench it that we may be still  
Content with merely living;  
But, would we learn that heart's full  
scope  
Which we are hourly wronging,  
Our lives must climb from hope to hope  
And realize our longing.

Ah! let us hope that to our praise  
Good God not only reckons  
The moments when we tread His ways,  
But when the spirit beckons, —  
That some slight good is also wrought  
Beyond self-satisfaction,  
When we are simply good in thought,  
Howe'er we fail in action.

## ODE TO FRANCE.

FEBRUARY, 1848.

## I.

As, flake by flake, the beetling ava-  
lanches  
Build up their imminent crags of  
noiseless snow,  
Till some chance thrill the loosened ruin  
launches  
In unwarned havoc on the roofs be-  
low,  
So grew and gathered through the silent  
years  
The madness of a People, wrong by  
wrong.

There seemed no strength in the dumb  
toiler's tears,  
No strength in suffering; but the Past  
was strong:  
The brute despair of trampled centuries  
Leaped up with one hoarse yell and  
snapped its bands,  
Groped for its right with horny, cal-  
lous hands,  
And stared around for God with blood-  
shot eyes.  
What wonder if those palms were all  
too hard  
For nice distinctions, — if that mænad  
throng —  
They whose thick atmosphere no bard  
Had shivered with the lightning of his  
song,  
Brutes with the memories and desires  
of men,  
Whose chronicles were writ with iron  
pen,  
In the crooked shoulder and the  
forehead low,  
Set wrong to balance wrong,  
And physicked woe with woe?

## II.

They did as they were taught; not theirs  
the blame,  
If men who scattered firebrands reaped  
the flame:  
They trampled Peace beneath their  
savage feet,  
And by her golden tresses drew  
Mercy along the pavement of the  
street.  
O Freedom! Freedom! is thy morning-  
dew  
So gory red? Alas, thy light had  
ne'er  
Shone in upon the chaos of their  
lair!  
They reared to thee such symbol as they  
knew,  
And worshipped it with flame and  
blood,  
A Vengeance, axe in hand, that  
stood  
Holding a tyrant's head up by the clot-  
ted hair.

## III.

What wrongs the Oppressor suffered,  
these we know;  
These have found piteous voice in song  
and prose;



But for the Oppressed, their darkness  
and their woe,  
Their grinding centuries, — what Muse  
had those ?  
Though hall and palace had nor eyes  
nor ears,  
Hardening a people's heart to senseless  
stone,  
Thou knewest them, O Earth, that  
drank their tears,  
O Heaven, that heard their inarticu-  
late moan !  
They noted down their fetters, link by  
link ;  
Coarse was the hand that scrawled, and  
red the ink ;  
Rude was their score, as suits unlet-  
tered men,  
Notched with a headsman's axe upon  
a block :  
What marvel if, when came the aveng-  
ing shock,  
'T was Atë, not Urania, held the  
pen ?

## IV.

With eye averted, and an anguished  
frown,  
Loathingly glides the Muse through  
scenes of strife,  
Where, like the heart of Vengeance up  
and down,  
Throbs in its framework the blood-  
muffled knife ;  
Slow are the steps of Freedom, but her  
feet  
Turn never backward : hers no bloody  
glare ;  
Her light is calm, and innocent, and  
sweet,  
And where it enters there is no de-  
spair :  
Not first on palace and cathedral spire  
Quivers and gleams that unconsuming  
fire ;  
While these stand black against her  
morning skies,  
The peasant sees it leap from peak to  
peak  
Along his hills ; the craftsman's burn-  
ing eyes  
Own with cool tears its influence mother-  
meek ;  
It lights the poet's heart up like a  
star ;  
Ah ! while the tyrant deemed it still  
afar,

And twined with golden threads his  
futile snare,  
That swift, convicting glow all round  
him ran ;  
'T was close beside him there,  
Sunrise whose Memnon is the soul of  
man.

## V.

O Broker-King, is this thy wisdom's  
fruit ?  
A dynasty plucked out as 't were a  
weed  
Grown rankly in a night, that leaves  
no seed !  
Could eighteen years strike down no  
deeper root ?  
But now thy vulture eye was turned  
on Spain ;  
A shout from Paris, and thy crown falls  
off,  
Thy race has ceased to reign,  
And thou become a fugitive and scoff :  
Slippery the feet that mount by stairs  
of gold,  
And weakest of all fences one of steel ;  
Go and keep school again like him of  
old,  
The Syracusan tyrant ; — thou mayst  
feel  
Royal amid a birch-swayed commonweal !

## VI.

Not long can he be ruler who allows  
His time to run before him ; thou  
wast naught  
Soon as the strip of gold about thy brows  
Was no more emblem of the People's  
thought :  
Vain were thy bayonets against the foe  
Thou hadst to cope with ; thou didst  
wage  
War not with Frenchmen merely ; — no,  
Thy strife was with the Spirit of the  
Age,  
The invisible Spirit whose first breath  
divine  
Scattered thy frail endeavor,  
And, like poor last year's leaves,  
whirled thee and thine  
Into the Dark forever !

## VII.

Is here no triumph ? Nay, what  
though  
The yellow blood of Trade meanwhile  
should pour

Along its arteries a shrunken flow,  
And the idle canvas droop around the  
shore ?

These do not make a state,  
Nor keep it great ;  
I think God made

The earth for man, not trade ;  
And where each humblest human crea-  
ture

Can stand, no more suspicious or afraid,  
Erect and kingly in his right of nature,  
To heaven and earth knit with harmo-  
nious ties, —

Where I behold the exultation  
Of manhood glowing in those eyes  
That had been dark for ages,  
Or only lit with bestial loves and  
rages,

There I behold a Nation :  
The France which lies  
Between the Pyrenees and Rhine  
Is the least part of France ;

I see her rather in the soul whose shine  
Burns through the craftsman's grimy  
countenance,

In the new energy divine  
Of Toil's enfranchised glance.

## VIII.

And if it be a dream,  
If the great Future be the little Past  
'Neath a new mask, which drops and  
shows at last

The same weird, mocking face to balk  
and blast,

Yet, Muse, a gladder measure suits the  
theme,

And the Tyrtæan harp  
Loves notes more resolute and  
sharp,

Throbbing, as throbs the bosom, hot  
and fast :

Such visions are of morning,  
Theirs is no vague forewarning,  
The dreams which nations dream come  
true,

And shape the world anew ;  
If this be a sleep,

Make it long, make it deep,  
O Father, who sendest the harvests men  
reap !

While Labor so sleepeth,  
His sorrow is gone,

No longer he weepeth,  
But smileth and steepeth  
His thoughts in the dawn ;

He heareth Hope yonder

Rain, lark-like, her fancies,  
His dreaming hands wander  
Mid heart's-ease and pansies ;  
" 'T is a dream ! 'T is a vision !"  
Shrieks Mammon aghast ;  
" The day's broad derision  
Will chase it at last ;  
Ye are mad, ye have taken  
A slumbering kraken  
For firm land of the Past !"  
Ah ! if he awaken,  
God shield us all then,  
If this dream rudely shaken  
Shall cheat him again !

## IX.

Since first I heard our North-wind  
blow,

Since first I saw Atlantic throw  
On our grim rocks his thunderous  
snow,

I loved thee, Freedom ; as a boy  
The rattle of thy shield at Marathon  
Did with a Grecian joy  
Through all my pulses run ;  
But I have learned to love thee now  
Without the helm upon thy gleaming  
brow,

A maiden mild and undefiled  
Like her who bore the world's redeem-  
ing child ;

And surely never did thine altars  
glance

With purer fires than now in France ;  
While, in their clear white flashes,  
Wrong's shadow, backward cast,  
Waves cowering o'er the ashes  
Of the dead, blaspheming Past,  
O'er the shapes of fallen giants,  
His own unburied brood,

Whose dead hands clench defiance  
At the overpowering God :  
And down the happy future runs a flood  
Of prophesying light ;

It shows an Earth no longer stained  
with blood,  
Blossom and fruit where now we see the  
bud

Of Brotherhood and Right.

## ANTI-APIS.

PRAISEST Law, friend ? We, too, love it  
much as they that love it best ;  
'T is the deep, august foundation, where  
on Peace and Justice rest ;

On the rock primeval, hidden in the  
Past its bases be,  
Block by block the endeavoring Ages  
built it up to what we see.

But dig down: the Old unbury; thou  
shalt find on every stone  
That each Age hath carved the symbol  
of what god to them was known.  
Ugly shapes and brutish sometimes, but  
the fairest that they knew;  
If their sight were dim and earthward,  
yet their hope and aim were true.

Surely as the unconscious needle feels  
the far-off loadstar draw,  
So strives every gracious nature to at-  
one itself with law;  
And the elder Saints and Sages laid their  
pious framework right  
By a theocratic instinct covered from the  
people's sight.

As their gods were, so their laws were;  
Thor the strong could reave and  
steal,  
So through many a peaceful inlet tore the  
Norseman's eager keel;  
But a new law came when Christ came,  
and not blameless, as before,  
Can we, paying him our lip-tithes, give  
our lives and faiths to Thor.

Law is holy: ay, but what law? Is there  
nothing more divine  
Than the patched-up broils of Congress,  
venal, full of meat and wine?  
Is there, say you, nothing higher?  
Naught, God save us! that tran-  
scends  
Laws of cotton texture, wove by vulgar  
men for vulgar ends?

Did Jehovah ask their counsel, or sub-  
mit to them a plan,  
Ere he filled with loves, hopes, longings,  
this aspiring heart of man?  
For their edict does the soul wait, ere it  
swing round to the pole  
Of the true, the free, the God-willed, all  
that makes it be a soul?

Law is holy; but not your law, ye who  
keep the tablets whole  
While ye dash the Law to pieces, shatter  
it in life and soul;

Bearing up the Ark is lightsome, golden  
Apis hid within,  
While we Levites share the offerings,  
richer by the people's sin.

Give to Cæsar what is Cæsar's? yes, but  
tell me, if you can,  
Is this superscription Cæsar's here upon  
our brother man?  
Is not here some other's image, dark and  
sullied though it be,  
In this fellow-soul that worships, strug-  
gles Godward even as we?

It was not to such a future that the May-  
flower's prow was turned;  
Not to such a faith the martyrs clung,  
exulting as they burned;  
Not by such laws are men fashioned,  
earnest, simple, valiant, great  
In the household virtues whereon rests  
the unconquerable state.

Ah! there is a higher gospel, overhead  
the God-roof springs,  
And each glad, obedient planet like a  
golden shuttle sings  
Through the web which Time is weaving  
in his never-resting loom,  
Weaving seasons many-colored, bringing  
prophecy to doom.

Think you Truth a farthing rushlight,  
to be pinched out when you will  
With your deft official fingers, and your  
politicians' skill?  
Is your God a wooden fetish, to be hid-  
den out of sight  
That his block eyes may not see you do  
the thing that is not right?

But the Destinies think not so; to their  
judgment-chamber lone  
Comes no noise of popular clamor, there  
Fame's trumpet is not blown;  
Your majorities they reckon not; that  
you grant, but then you say  
That you differ with them somewhat,—  
which is stronger, you or they?

Patient are they as the insects that build  
islands in the deep;  
They hurl not the bolted thunder, but  
their silent way they keep;



Where they have been that we know ;  
 where empires towered that were not  
 just ;

Lo ! the skulking wild fox scratches in a  
 little heap of dust.

1851.

## A PARABLE.

SAID Christ our Lord, "I will go and see  
 How the men, my brethren, believe in  
 me."

He passed not again through the gate of  
 birth,

But made himself known to the children  
 of earth.

Then said the chief priests, and rulers,  
 and kings,

"Behold, now, the Giver of all good  
 things ;

Go to, let us welcome with pomp and  
 state

Him who alone is mighty and great."

With carpets of gold the ground they  
 spread

Wherever the Son of Man should tread,  
 And in palace-chambers lofty and rare  
 They lodged him, and served him with  
 kingly fare.

Great organs surged through arches dim  
 Their jubilant floods in praise of him ;  
 And in church, and palace, and judg-  
 ment-hall,  
 He saw his own image high over all.

But still, wherever his steps they led,  
 The Lord in sorrow bent down his head,  
 And from under the heavy foundation-  
 stones,

The son of Mary heard bitter groans.

And in church, and palace, and judg-  
 ment-hall,

He marked great fissures that rent the  
 wall,

And opened wider and yet more wide  
 As the living foundation heaved and  
 sighed.

"Have ye founded your thrones and  
 altars, then,

On the bodies and souls of living men ?  
 And think ye that building shall endure,  
 Which shelters the noble and crushes the  
 poor ?

"With gates of silver and bars of gold  
 Ye have fenced my sheep from their  
 Father's fold ;

I have heard the dropping of their tears  
 In heaven these eighteen hundred years."

"O Lord and Master, not ours the guilt,  
 We build but as our fathers built ;  
 Behold thine images, how they stand,  
 Sovereign and sole, through all our land.

"Our task is hard,— with sword and  
 flame

To hold thine earth forever the same,  
 And with sharp crooks of steel to keep  
 Still, as thou leftest them, thy sheep."

Then Christ sought out an artisan,  
 A low-browed, stunted, haggard man,  
 And a motherless girl, whose fingers thin  
 Pushed from her faintly want and sin.

These set he in the midst of them,  
 And as they drew back their garment-  
 hem,

For fear of defilement, "Lo, here," said  
 he,

"The images ye have made of me !"

## ODE

WRITTEN FOR THE CELEBRATION OF  
 THE INTRODUCTION OF THE COCHIT-  
 UATE WATER INTO THE CITY OF  
 BOSTON.

My name is Water : I have sped  
 Through strange, dark ways, untried  
 before,

By pure desire of friendship led,  
 Cochituate's ambassador ;  
 He sends four royal gifts by me :  
 Long life, health, peace, and purity.

I'm Ceres' cup-bearer ; I pour,  
 For flowers and fruits and all their kin,  
 Her crystal vintage, from of yore  
 Stored in old Earth's selectest bin,  
 Flora's Falernian ripe, since God  
 The wine-press of the deluge trod.

In that far isle whence, iron-willed,  
 The New World's sires their bark  
 unmoored,  
 The fairies' acorn-cups I filled  
 Upon the toadstool's silver board,

And, 'neath Herne's oak, for Shakespeare's sight,  
Strewed moss and grass with diamonds bright.

No fairies in the Mayflower came,  
And, lightsome as I sparkle here,  
For Mother Bay State, busy dame,  
I've toiled and drudged this many a  
year,

Throbb'd in her engines' iron veins,  
Twirled myriad spindles for her gains.

I, too, can weave: the warp I set  
Through which the sun his shuttle  
throws,  
And, bright as Noah saw it, yet  
For you the arching rainbow glows,  
A sight in Paradise denied  
To unfallen Adam and his bride.

When Winter held me in his grip,  
You seized and sent me o'er the wave,  
Ungrateful! in a prison-ship;  
But I forgive, not long a slave,  
For, soon as summer south-winds blew,  
Homeward I fled, disguised as dew.

For countless services I'm fit,  
Of use, of pleasure, and of gain,  
But lightly from all bonds I flit,  
Nor lose my mirth, nor feel a stain;  
From mill and wash-tub I escape,  
And take in heaven my proper shape.

So, free myself, to-day, elate  
I come from far o'er hill and mead,  
And here, Cochituate's envoy, wait  
To be your blithesome Ganymede,  
And brim your cups with nectar true  
That never will make slaves of you.

## LINES

SUGGESTED BY THE GRAVES OF TWO  
ENGLISH SOLDIERS ON CONCORD  
BATTLE-GROUND.

The same good blood that now refills  
The dotard Orient's shrunken veins,  
The same whose vigor westward thrills,  
Bursting Nevada's silver chains,  
Poured here upon the April grass,  
Freckled with red the herbage new;  
On reeled the battle's trampling mass,  
Back to the ash the bluebird flew.

Poured here in vain;—that sturdy blood  
Was meant to make the earth more  
green,

But in a higher, gentler mood  
Than broke this April noon serene;  
Two graves are here: to mark the place,  
At head and foot, an unhewn stone,  
O'er which the herald lichens trace  
The blazon of Oblivion.

These men were brave enough, and true  
To the hired soldier's bull-dog creed;  
What brought them here they never  
knew,

They fought as suits the English breed:  
They came three thousand miles, and  
died,

To keep the Past upon its throne;  
Unheard, beyond the ocean tide,  
Their English mother made her moan.

The turf that covers them no thrill  
Sends up to fire the heart and brain;  
No stronger purpose nerves the will,  
No hope renews its youth again:  
From farm to farm the Concord glides,  
And trails my fancy with its flow;  
O'erhead the balanced hen-hawk slides,  
Twinned in the river's heaven below.

But go, whose Bay State bosom stirs,  
Proud of thy birth and neighbor's right,  
Where sleep the heroic villagers  
Borne red and stiff from Concord fight;  
Thought Reuben, snatching down his  
gun,

Or Seth, as ebb'd the life away,  
What earthquake rifts would shoot and  
run

World-wide from that short April fray!

What then? With heart and hand they  
wrought,

According to their village light;  
'T was for the Future that they fought,  
Their rustic faith in what was right.  
Upon earth's tragic stage they burst  
Unsummoned, in the humble sock;  
Theirs the fifth act; the curtain first  
Rose long ago on Charles's block.

Their graves have voices; if they threw  
Dice charged with fates beyond their  
ken,

Yet to their instincts they were true,  
And had the genius to be men.

Fine privilege of Freedom's host,  
Of humblest soldiers for the Right! —  
Age after age ye hold your post,  
Your graves send courage forth, and  
might.

TO —.

WE, too, have autumns, when our leaves  
Drop loosely through the dampened  
air,

When all our good seems bound in  
sheaves,  
And we stand reaped and bare.

Our seasons have no fixed returns,  
Without our will they come and go ;  
At noon our sudden summer burns,  
Ere sunset all is snow.

But each day brings less summer cheer,  
Crimps more our ineffectual spring,  
And something earlier every year  
Our singing birds take wing.

As less the olden glow abides,  
And less the chillier heart aspires,  
With drift-wood beached in past spring-  
tides  
We light our sullen fires.

By the pinched rushlight's starving  
beam  
We cower and strain our wasted sight,  
To stitch youth's shroud up, seam by  
seam,  
In the long arctic night.

It was not so — we once were young —  
When Spring, to womanly Summer  
turning,  
Her dew-drops on each grass-blade  
strung,  
In the red sunrise burning.

We trusted then, aspired, believed  
That earth could be remade to-mor-  
row ;  
Ah, why be ever undeceived ?  
Why give up faith for sorrow ?

O thou, whose days are yet all spring,  
Faith, blighted once, is past retriev-  
ing ;  
Experience is a dumb, dead thing ;  
The victory 's in believing.

### FREEDOM.

ARE we, then, wholly fallen ? Can it be  
That thou, North wind, that from thy  
mountains bringest  
Their spirit to our plains, and thou,  
blue sea,

Who on our rocks thy wreaths of free-  
dom flingest,  
As on an altar, — can it be that ye  
Have wasted inspiration on dead ears,  
Dulled with the too familiar clank of  
chains ?

The people's heart is like a harp for  
years  
Hung where some petrifying torrent rains  
Its slow-incrusting spray : the stiffened  
chords  
Faint and more faint make answer to the  
tears

That drip upon them : idle are all words :  
Only a golden plectrum wakes the tone  
Deep buried 'neath that ever-thickening  
stone.

We are not free : doth Freedom, then,  
consist  
In musing with our faces toward the  
Past,

While petty cares, and crawling inter-  
ests, twist  
Their spider-threads about us, which at  
last

Grow strong as iron chains, to cramp  
and bind  
In formal narrowness heart, soul, and  
mind ?

Freedom is recreated year by year,  
In hearts wide open on the Godward side,  
In souls calm-cadenced as the whirling  
sphere,

In minds that sway the future like a tide.  
No broadest creeds can hold her, and no  
codes ;

She chooses men for her august abodes,  
Building them fair and fronting to the  
dawn ;

Yet, when we seek her, we but find a  
few

Light footprints, leading morn-ward  
through the dew :

Before the day had risen, she was gone.

And we must follow : swiftly runs she on,  
And, if our steps should slacken in de-  
spair,



Half turns her face, half smiles through  
golden hair,  
Forever yielding, never wholly won :  
That is not love which pauses in the race  
Two close-linked names on fleeting sand  
to trace ;  
Freedom gained yesterday is no more  
ours ;  
Men gather but dry seeds of last year's  
flowers ;  
Still there 's a charm ungranted, still a  
grace,  
Still rosy Hope, the free, the unattained,  
Makes us Possession's languid hand let  
fall ;  
'T is but a fragment of ourselves is  
gained,  
The Future brings us more, but never  
all.

And, as the finder of some unknown  
realm,  
Mounting a summit whence he thinks to  
see  
On either side of him the imprisoning  
sea,  
Beholds, above the clouds that over-  
whelm  
The valley-land, peak after snowy peak  
Stretch out of sight, each like a silver  
helm  
Beneath its plume of smoke, sublime  
and bleak,  
And what he thought an island finds to  
be  
A continent to him first oped, — so we  
Can from our height of Freedom look  
along  
A boundless future, ours if we be strong ;  
Or if we shrink, better remount our  
ships  
And, fleeing God's express design, trace  
back  
The hero-freighted Mayflower's prophet-  
track  
To Europe, entering her blood-red eclipse.

1848.

## BIBLIOLATRES.

BOWING thyself in dust before a Book,  
And thinking the great God is thine  
alone,  
O rash iconoclast, thou wilt not brook  
What gods the heathen carves in wood  
and stone,  
As if the Shepherd who from outer cold

Leads all his shivering lambs to one sure  
fold  
Were careful for the fashion of his crook.  
There is no broken reed so poor and base,  
No rush, the bending tilt of swamp-fly  
blue,  
But he therewith the ravening wolf can  
chase,  
And guide his flock to springs and pas-  
tures new ;  
Through ways unlooked for, and through  
many lands,  
Far from the rich folds built with human  
hands,  
The gracious footprints of his love I  
trace.

And what art thou, own brother of the  
clod,  
That from his hand the crook would'st  
snatch away  
And shake instead thy dry and sapless  
rod,  
To scare the sheep out of the wholesome  
day ?  
Yea, what art thou, blind, unconverted  
Jew,  
That with thy idol-volume's covers two  
Wouldst make a jail to coop the living  
God ?

Thou hear'st not well the mountain  
organ-tones  
By prophet ears from Hor and Sinai  
caught,  
Thinking the cisterns of those Hebrew  
brains  
Drew dry the springs of the All-knower's  
thought,  
Nor shall thy lips be touched with liv-  
ing fire,  
Who blow'st old altar-coals with sole  
desire  
To weld anew the spirit's broken chains.

God is not dumb, that he should speak  
no more ;  
If thou hast wanderings in the wilder-  
ness  
And find'st not Sinai, 't is thy soul is  
poor ;  
There towers the mountain of the Voice  
no less,  
Which whoso seeks shall find, but he  
who bends,

Intent on manna still and mortal ends,  
Sees it not, neither hears its thundered  
lore.

Slowly the Bible of the race is writ,  
And not on paper leaves nor leaves of  
stone;

Each age, each kindred, adds a verse  
to it,

Texts of despair or hope, of joy or moan.  
While swings the sea, while mists the  
mountains shroud,

While thunder's surges burst on cliffs of  
cloud,

Still at the prophets' feet the nations sit.

### BEAVER BROOK.

HUSHED with broad sunlight lies the  
hill,

And, minuting the long day's loss,  
The cedar's shadow, slow and still,  
Creeps o'er its dial of gray moss.

Warm noon brims full the valley's cup,  
The aspen's leaves are scarce astir;  
Only the little mill sends up  
Its busy, never-ceasing burr.

Climbing the loose-piled wall that hems  
The road along the mill-pond's brink,  
From 'neath the arching barberry-stems,  
My footstep scares the shy chewink.

Beneath a bony buttonwood  
The mill's red door lets forth the din;  
The whitened miller, dust-imbued,  
Flits past the square of dark within.

No mountain torrent's strength is here;  
Sweet Beaver, child of forest still,

Heaps its small pitcher to the ear,  
And gently waits the miller's will.

Swift slips Undine along the race  
Unheard, and then, with flashing bound,  
Floods the dull wheel with light and  
grace,

And, laughing, hunts the loath drudge  
round.

The miller dreams not at what cost  
The quivering millstones hum and  
whirl,

Nor how for every turn are tost  
Armfuls of diamond and of pearl.

But Summer cleared my happier eyes  
With drops of some celestial juice,  
To see how Beauty underlies,  
Forevermore each form of use.

And more; methought I saw that flood,  
Which now so dull and darkling steals,  
Thick, here and there, with human  
blood,

To turn the world's laborious wheels.

No more than doth the miller there,  
Shut in our several cells, do we  
Know with what waste of beauty rare  
Moves every day's machinery.

Surely the wiser time shall come  
When this fine overplus of might,  
No longer sullen, slow, and dumb,  
Shall leap to music and to light.

In that new childhood of the Earth  
Life of itself shall dance and play,  
Fresh blood in Time's shrunk veins make  
mirth,

And labor meet delight half-way.

## MEMORIAL VERSES.

## KOSSUTH.

A RACE of nobles may die out,  
A royal line may leave no heir ;  
Wise Nature sets no guards about  
Her pewter plate and wooden ware.

But they fail not, the kinglier breed,  
Who starry diadems attain ;  
To dungeon, axe, and stake succeed  
Heirs of the old heroic strain.

The zeal of Nature never cools,  
Nor is she thwarted of her ends ;  
When gapped and dulled her cheaper  
tools,  
Then she a saint and prophet spends.

Land of the Magyars ! though it be  
The tyrant may relink his chain,  
Already thine the victory,  
As the just Future measures gain.

Thou hast succeeded, thou hast won  
The deathly travail's amplest worth ;  
A nation's duty thou hast done,  
Giving a hero to our earth.

And he, let come what will of woe,  
Hath saved the land he strove to save ;  
No Cossack hordes, no traitor's blow,  
Can quench the voice shall haunt his  
grave.

" I Kossuth am : O Future, thou  
That clear'st the just and blott'st the  
vile,  
O'er this small dust in reverence bow,  
Remembering what I was erewhile.

" I was the chosen trump wherethrough  
Our God sent forth awakening breath ;  
Came chains ? Came death ? The strain  
He blew  
Sounds on, outliving chains and death."

## TO LAMARTINE.

1848.

I DID not praise thee when the crowd,  
'Witched with the moment's inspi-  
ration,  
Vexed thy still ether with hosannas loud,  
And stamped their dusty adoration ;  
I but looked upward with the rest,  
And, when they shouted Greatest, whis-  
pered Best.

They raised thee not, but rose to thee,  
Their fickle wreaths about thee fling-  
ing ;  
So on some marble Phœbus the swol'n sea  
Might leave his worthless seaweed  
clinging,  
But pious hands, with reverent care,  
Make the pure limbs once more sub-  
limely bare.

Now thou'rt thy plain, grand self again,  
Thou art secure from panegyric,  
Thou who gav'st politics an epic strain,  
And actedst Freedom's noblest  
lyric ;  
This side the Blessed Isles, no tree  
Grows green enough to make a wreath  
for thee.

Nor can blame cling to thee ; the snow  
From swinish footprints takes no  
staining,  
But, leaving the gross soils of earth be-  
low,  
Its spirit mounts, the skies regain-  
ing,  
And unresentful falls again,  
To beautify the world with dews and  
rain.

The highest duty to mere man vouch-  
safed  
Was laid on thee, — out of wild  
chaos,



When the roused popular ocean foamed  
and chafed,  
And vulture War from his Imaus  
Snuffed blood, to summon homely  
Peace,  
And show that only order is release.

To carve thy fullest thought, what  
though  
Time was not granted? Aye in  
history,  
Like that Dawn's face which baffled  
Angelo  
Left shapeless, grander for its mys-  
tery,  
Thy great Design shall stand, and day  
Flood its blind front from Orient's far  
away.

Who says thy day is o'er? Control,  
My heart, that bitter first emotion;  
While men shall reverence the steadfast  
soul,  
The heart in silent self-devotion  
Breaking, the mild, heroic mien,  
Thou 'lt need no prop of marble, Lamar-  
tine.

If France reject thee, 't is not thine,  
But her own, exile that she utters;  
Ideal France, the deathless, the divine,  
Will be where thy white pennon  
flutters,  
As once the nobler Athens went  
With Aristides into banishment.

No fitting meteward hath To-day  
For measuring spirits of thy stat-  
ure;  
Only the Future can reach up to lay  
The laurel on that lofty nature,  
Bard, who with some diviner art  
Hast touched the bard's true lyre, a na-  
tion's heart.

Swept by thy hand, the gladdened  
chords,  
Crashed now in discords fierce by  
others,  
Gave forth one note beyond all skill of  
words,  
And chimed together, We are broth-  
ers.

O poem unsurpassed! it ran  
All round the world, unlocking man to  
man.

France is too poor to pay alone  
The service of that amp'e spirit;  
Paltry seem low dictatorship and throne,  
Weighed with thy self-renouncing  
merit;  
They had to thee been rust and loss;  
Thy aim was higher, — thou hast climbed  
a Cross!

TO JOHN G. PALFREY.

THERE are who triumph in a losing  
cause,  
Who can put on defeat, as 't were a  
wreath  
Unwithering in the adverse popular  
breath,  
Safe from the blasting demagogue's  
applause;  
'T is they who stand for Freedom and  
God's laws.

And so stands Palfrey now, as Marvell  
stood,  
Loyal to Truth dethroned, nor could be  
wooded

To trust the playful tiger's velvet  
paws:  
And if the second Charles brought in  
decay

Of ancient virtue, if it well might  
wring  
Souls that had broadened 'neath a  
nobler day,

To see a losel, marketable king,  
Fearfully watering with his realm's best  
blood

Cromwell's quenched bolts, that erst  
had cracked and flamed,  
Scaring, through all their depths of  
courtier mud,

Europe's crowned bloodsuckers, —  
how more ashamed

Ought we to be, who see Corruption's  
flood

Still rise o'er last year's mark, to  
mine away

Our brazen idol's feet of treacherous  
clay!

O utter degradation! Freedom turned  
Slavery's vile bawd, to cozen and be-  
tray

To the old lecher's clutch a maiden  
prey,

If so a loathsome pander's fee be  
earned!

And we are silent,— we who daily tread  
 A soil sublime, at least, with heroes' graves!—  
 Beckon no more, shades of the noble dead!  
 Be dumb, ye heaven-touched lips of winds and waves!  
 Or hope to rouse some Coptic dullard, hid  
 Ages ago, wrapt stiffly, fold on fold,  
 With cerements close, to wither in the cold,  
 Forever hushed, and sunless pyramid!

Beauty and Truth, and all that these contain,  
 Drop not like ripened fruit about our feet;  
 We climb to them through years of sweat and pain;  
 Without long struggle, none did e'er attain  
 The downward look from Quiet's blissful seat:  
 Though present loss may be the hero's part,  
 Yet none can rob him of the victor heart  
 Whereby the broad-realmed future is subdued,  
 And Wrong, which now insults from triumph's car,  
 Sending her vulture hope to raven far,  
 Is made unwilling tributary of Good.

O Mother State, how quenched thy Sinai fires!  
 Is there none left of thy stanch Mayflower breed?  
 No spark among the ashes of thy sires,  
 Of Virtue's altar-flame the kindling seed?  
 Are these thy great men, these that cringe and creep,  
 And writhe through slimy ways to place and power?—  
 How long, O Lord, before thy wrath shall reap  
 Our frail-stemmed summer prosperings in their flower?  
 O for one hour of that undaunted stock  
 That went with Vane and Sidney to the block!

O for a whiff of Naseby, that would sweep,  
 With its stern Puritan besom, all this chaff  
 From the Lord's threshing-floor! Yet more than half  
 The victory is attained, when one or two,  
 Through the fool's laughter and the traitor's scorn,  
 Beside thy sepulchre can bide the morn,  
 Crucified Truth, when thou shalt rise anew.

## TO W. L. GARRISON.

"Some time afterward, it was reported to me by the city officers that they had ferreted out the paper and its editor; that his office was an obscure hole, his only visible auxiliary a negro boy, and his supporters a few very insignificant persons of all colors."— *Letter of H. G. Otis.*

In a small chamber, friendless and unseen,  
 Toiled o'er his types one poor, unlearned young man;  
 The place was dark, unfurnished, and mean;  
 Yet there the freedom of a race began.

Help came but slowly; surely no man yet  
 Put lever to the heavy world with less:  
 What need of help? He knew how types were set,  
 He had a dauntless spirit, and a press.

Such earnest natures are the fiery pith,  
 The compact nucleus, round which systems grow;  
 Mass after mass becomes inspired there-with,  
 And whirls impregnate with the central glow.

O Truth! O Freedom! how are ye still born  
 In the rude stable, in the manger nurst!  
 What humble hands unbar those gates of morn  
 Through which the splendors of the New Day burst!

What! shall one monk, scarce known  
beyond his cell,

Front Rome's far-reaching bolts, and  
scorn her frown?

Brave Luther answered YES; that thun-  
der's swell

Rocked Europe, and discharmed the  
triple crown.

Whatever can be known of earth we  
know,

Sneered Europe's wise men, in their  
snail-shells curled;

No! said one man in Genoa, and that  
No

Out of the darkness summoned this  
New World.

Who is it will not dare himself to trust?

Who is it hath not strength to stand  
alone?

Who is it thwarts and bilks the inward  
MUST?

He and his works, like sand, from  
earth are blown.

Men of a thousand shifts and wiles,  
look here!

See one straightforward conscience  
put in pawn

To win a world; see the obedient sphere  
By bravery's simple gravitation drawn!

Shall we not heed the lesson taught of  
old,

And by the Present's lips repeated  
still,

In our own single manhood to be bold,  
Fortressed in conscience and impreg-  
nable will?

We stride the river daily at its spring,  
Nor, in our childish thoughtlessness,  
foresee,

What myriad vassal streams shall trib-  
ute bring,

How like an equal it shall greet the  
sea.

O small beginnings, ye are great and  
strong,

Based on a faithful heart and wear-  
less brain!

Ye build the future fair, ye conquer  
wrong,

Ye earn the crown, and wear it not in  
vain.

#### ON THE DEATH OF C. T. TORREY.

Woe worth the hour when it is crime  
To plead the poor dumb bondman's  
cause,

When all that makes the heart sublime,  
The glorious throbs that conquer time,  
Are traitors to our cruel laws!

He strove among God's suffering poor  
One gleam of brotherhood to send;  
The dungeon oped its hungry door  
To give the truth one martyr more,  
Then shut,—and here behold the  
end!

O Mother State! when this was done,  
No pitying throe thy bosom gave;  
Silent thou saw'st the death-shroud  
spun,

And now thou givest to thy son  
The stranger's charity,—a grave.

Must it be thus forever? No!  
The hand of God sows not in vain; !  
Long sleeps the darkling seed below,  
The seasons come, and change, and go,  
And all the fields are deep with grain.

Although our brother lie asleep,  
Man's heart still struggles, still as-  
pires;

His grave shall quiver yet, while deep  
Through the brave Bay State's pulses  
leap  
Her ancient energies and fires.

When hours like this the senses' gush  
Have stilled, and left the spirit room,  
It hears amid the eternal hush  
The swooping pinions' dreadful rush,  
That bring the vengeance and the  
doom;—

Not man's brute vengeance, such as rends  
What rivets man to man apart,—  
God doth not so bring round his ends,  
But waits the ripened time, and sends  
His mercy to the oppressor's heart.

#### ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF DR. CHANNING.

I do not come to weep above thy pall,  
And mourn the dying-out of noble  
powers;



The poet's clearer eye should see, in all  
Earth's seeming woe, seed of immortal  
flowers.

Truth needs no champions : in the infinite deep  
Of everlasting Soul her strength abides,  
From Nature's heart her mighty pulses leap,  
Through Nature's veins her strength, undying, tides.

Peace is more strong than war, and gentleness,  
Where force were vain, makes conquest o'er the wave ;  
And love lives on and hath a power to bless,  
When they who loved are hidden in the grave.

The sculptured marble brags of death-strewn fields,  
And Glory's epitaph is writ in blood ;  
But Alexander now to Plato yields,  
Clarkson will stand where Wellington hath stood.

I watch the circle of the eternal years,  
And read forever in the storied page  
One lengthened roll of blood, and wrong,  
and tears,  
One onward step of Truth from age to age.

The poor are crushed ; the tyrants link their chain ;  
The poet sings through narrow dungeon-grates ;  
Man's hope lies quenched ; and, lo !  
with steadfast gain  
Freedom doth forge her mail of adverse fates.

Men slay the prophets ; fagot, rack, and cross  
Make up the groaning record of the past ;  
But Evil's triumphs are her endless loss,  
And sovereign Beauty wins the soul at last.

No power can die that ever wrought for Truth ;  
Thereby a law of Nature it became,

And lives unwithered in its blithesome youth,  
When he who called it forth is but a name.

Therefore I cannot think thee wholly gone ;  
The better part of thee is with us still ;  
Thy soul its hampering clay aside hath thrown,  
And only freer wrestles with the Ill.

Thou livest in the life of all good things ;  
What words thou spak'st for Freedom shall not die ;  
Thou sleepest not, for now thy Love hath wings  
To soar where hence thy Hope could hardly fly.

And often, from that other world, on this  
Some gleams from great souls gone before may shine,  
To shed on struggling hearts a clearer bliss,  
And clothe the Right with lustre more divine.

Thou art not idle : in thy higher sphere  
Thy spirit bends itself to loving tasks,  
And strength to perfect what it dreamed of here  
Is all the crown and glory that it asks.

For sure, in Heaven's wide chambers, there is room  
For love and pity, and for helpful deeds ;  
Else were our summons thither but a doom  
To life more vain than this in clayey weeds.

From off the starry mountain-peak of song,  
Thy spirit shows me, in the coming time,  
An earth unwithered by the foot of wrong,  
A race revering its own soul sublime.

What wars, what martyrdoms, what crimes, may come,  
Thou knowest not, nor I ; but God will lead

The prodigal soul from want and sorrow  
home,  
And Eden ope her gates to Adam's  
seed.

Farewell ! good man, good angel now !  
this hand

Soon, like thine own, shall lose its  
cunning too ;

Soon shall this soul, like thine, bewil-  
dered stand,

Then leap to thread the free, unfath-  
omed blue :

When that day comes, O, may this hand  
grow cold,

Rusy, like thine, for Freedom and the  
Right ;

O, may this soul, like thine, be ever bold  
To face dark Slavery's encroaching  
blight !

This laurel-leaf I cast upon thy bier ;  
Let worthier hands than these thy  
wreath intwine ;

Upon thy hearse I shed no useless tear, —  
For us weep rather thou in calm di-  
vine !

1842.

#### TO THE MEMORY OF HOOD.

ANOTHER star 'neath Time's horizon  
dropped,

To gleam o'er unknown lands and  
seas ;

Another heart that beat for freedom  
stopped, —

What mournful words are these !

O Love Divine, that claspest our tired  
earth,

And lullest it upon thy heart,

Thou knowest how much a gentle soul  
is worth  
To teach men what thou art !

His was a spirit that to all thy poor  
Was kind as slumber after pain:

Why ope so soon thy heaven-deep  
Quiet's door

And call him home again ?

Freedom needs all her poets : it is they  
Who give her aspirations wings,

And to the wiser law of music sway  
Her wild imaginings.

Yet thou hast called him, nor art thou  
unkind,

O Love Divine, for't is thy will

That gracious natures leave their love  
behind

To work for Mercy still.

Let laurelled marbles weigh on other  
tombs,

Let anthems peal for other dead,

Rustling the bannered depth of minster-  
glooms

With their exulting spread.

His epitaph shall mock the short-lived  
stone,

No lichen shall its lines efface,

He needs these few and simple lines  
alone

To mark his resting-place : —

“Here lies a Poet. Stranger, if to  
thee

His claim to memory be obscure,

If thou wouldst learn how truly great  
was he,

Go, ask it of the poor.”

## THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL.

## PRELUDE TO PART FIRST.

OVER his keys the musing organist,  
 Beginning doubtfully and far away,  
 First lets his fingers wander as they list,  
 And builds a bridge from Dreamland  
 for his lay :  
 Then, as the touch of his loved instru-  
 ment  
 Gives hope and fervor, nearer draws  
 his theme,  
 First guessed by faint auroral flushes  
 sent  
 Along the wavering vista of his dream.

Not only around our infancy  
 Doth heaven with all its splendors lie ;  
 Daily, with souls that cringe and plot,  
 We Sinais climb and know it not.

Over our manhood bend the skies ;  
 Against our fallen and traitor lives  
 The great winds utter prophecies ;  
 With our faint hearts the mountain  
 strives ;  
 Its arms outstretched, the druid wood  
 Waits with its benedicite ;  
 And to our age's drowsy blood  
 Still shouts the inspiring sea.

Earth gets its price for what Earth gives  
 us ;  
 The beggar is taxed for a corner to die  
 in,  
 The priest hath his fee who comes and  
 shrives us,  
 We bargain for the graves we lie in ;  
 At the devil's booth are all things sold,  
 Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of  
 gold ;  
 For a cap and bells our lives we pay,  
 Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's  
 tasking :  
 'T is heaven alone that is given away,  
 'T is only God may be had for 'the ask-  
 ing ;

No price is set on the lavish summer ;  
 June may be had by the poorest comer.

And what is so rare as a day in June ?  
 Then, if ever, come perfect days ;  
 Then Heaven tries earth if it be in  
 tune,

And over it softly her warm ear lays :  
 Whether we look, or whether we listen,  
 We hear life murmur, or see it glisten ;  
 Every clod feels a stir of might,  
 An instinct within it that reaches and  
 towers,

And, groping blindly above it for light,  
 Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers ;  
 The flush of life may well be seen

Thrilling back over hills and valleys ;  
 The cowslip startles in meadows green,  
 The buttercup catches the sun in its  
 chalice,

And there's never a leaf nor a blade too  
 mean

To be some happy creature's palace ;  
 The little bird sits at his door in the  
 sun,

Atilt like a blossom among the leaves,  
 And lets his illumined being o'errun

With the deluge of summer it receives ;  
 His mate feels the eggs beneath her  
 wings,

And the heart in her dumb breast flutters  
 and sings ;

He sings to the wide world, and she to  
 her nest, —

In the nice ear of Nature which song is  
 the best ?

Now is the high-tide of the year,  
 And whatever of life hath ebbed away  
 Comes flooding back with a ripply cheer,  
 Into every bare inlet and creek and  
 bay ;

Now the heart is so full that a drop  
 overfills it,

We are happy now because God wills it ;  
 No matter how barren the past may  
 have been,



'T is enough for us now that the leaves  
are green ;  
We sit in the warm shade and feel right  
well  
How the sap creeps up and the blossoms  
swell ;  
We may shut our eyes, but we cannot  
help knowing  
That skies are clear and grass is grow-  
ing ;  
The breeze comes whispering in our ear,  
That dandelions are blossoming near,  
That maize has sprouted, that streams  
are flowing,  
That the river is bluer than the sky,  
That the robin is plastering his house  
hard by ;  
And if the breeze kept the good news  
back,  
For other couriers we should not lack ;  
We could guess it all by yon heifer's  
lowing, —  
And hark ! how clear bold caanticleer,  
Warned with the new wine of the year,  
Tells all in his lusty crowing !

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how ;  
Everything is happy now,  
Everything is upward striving ;  
'T is as easy now for the heart to be true  
As for grass to be green or skies to be  
blue, —  
'T is the natural way of living :  
Who knows whither the clouds have  
fled ?  
In the unscarred heaven they leave no  
wake ;  
And the eyes forget the tears they have  
shed,  
The heart forgets its sorrow and ache ;  
The soul partakes the season's youth,  
And the sulphurous rifts of passion  
and woe  
Lie deep 'neath a silence pure and  
smooth,  
Like burnt-out craters healed with  
snow.  
What wonder if Sir Launfal now  
Remembered the keeping of his vow ?

## PART FIRST.

## I.

" My golden spurs now bring to me,  
And bring to me my richest mail,  
For to-morrow I go over land and sea

In search of the Holy Grail ;  
Shall never a bed for me be spread,  
Nor shall a pillow be under my head,  
Till I begin my vow to keep ;  
Here on the rushes will I sleep,  
And perchance there may come a vision  
true  
Ere day create the world anew."'  
Slowly Sir Launfal's eyes grew dim,  
Slumber fell like a cloud on him,  
And into his soul the vision flew.

## II.

The crows flapped over by twos and  
threes,  
In the pool drowsed the cattle up to  
their knees,  
The little birds sang as if it were  
The one day of summer in all the year,  
And the very leaves seemed to sing on  
the trees :  
The castle alone in the landscape lay  
Like an outpost of winter, dull and  
gray :  
'T was the proudest hall in the North  
Countrie,  
And never its gates might opened be,  
Save to lord or lady of high degree ;  
Summer besieged it on every side,  
But the churlish stone her assaults de-  
fied ;  
She could not scale the chilly wall,  
Though around it for leagues her pa-  
vilions tall  
Stretched left and right,  
Over the hills and out of sight ;  
Green and broad was every tent,  
And out of each a murmur went  
Till the breeze fell off at night.

## III.

The drawbridge dropped with a surly  
clang,  
And through the dark arch a charger  
sprang,  
Bearing Sir Launfal, the maiden knight,  
In his gilded mail, that flamed so bright  
It seemed the dark castle had gathered  
all  
Those shafts the fierce sun had shot over  
its wall  
In his siege of three hundred summers  
long,  
And, binding them all in one blazing  
sheaf,  
Had cast them forth : so, young and  
strong,

And lightsome as a locust-leaf,  
 Sir Launfal flashed forth in his maiden  
 mail,  
 To seek in all climes for the Holy Grail.

## IV.

It was morning on hill and stream and  
 tree,  
 And morning in the young knight's  
 heart;  
 Only the castle moodily  
 Rebuffed the gifts of the sunshine free,  
 And gloomed by itself apart;  
 The season brimmed all other things up  
 Full as the rain fills the pitcher-plant's  
 cup.

## V.

As Sir Launfal made morn through the  
 darksome gate,  
 He was 'ware of a leper, crouched by  
 the same,  
 Who begged with his hand and moaned  
 as he sate;  
 And a loathing over Sir Launfal came;  
 The sunshine went out of his soul with  
 a thrill,  
 The flesh 'neath his armor 'gan shrink  
 and crawl,  
 And midway its leap his heart stood still  
 Like a frozen waterfall;  
 For this man, so foul and bent of stature,  
 Rased harshly against his dainty nature,  
 And seemed the one blot on the summer  
 morn, —  
 So he tossed him a piece of gold in scorn.

## VI.

The leper raised not the gold from the  
 dust:  
 "Better to me the poor man's crust,  
 Better the blessing of the poor,  
 Though I turn me empty from his door;  
 That is no true alms which the hand  
 can hold;  
 He gives only the worthless gold  
 Who gives from a sense of duty;  
 But he who gives but a slender mite,  
 And gives to that which is out of sight,  
 That thread of the all-sustaining  
 Beauty  
 Which runs through all and doth all  
 unite, —  
 The hand cannot clasp the whole of his  
 alms,  
 The heart outstretches its eager palms,

For a god goes with it and makes it  
 store  
 To the soul that was starving in dark-  
 ness before."

## PRELUDE TO PART SECOND.

DOWN swept the chill wind from the  
 mountain peak,  
 From the snow five thousand summers  
 old;  
 On open wold and hill-top bleak  
 It had gathered all the cold,  
 And whirled it like sleet on the wan-  
 derer's cheek;  
 It carried a shiver everywhere  
 From the unleafed boughs and pastures  
 bare;  
 The little brook heard it and built a roof  
 'Neath which he could house him, win-  
 ter-proof;  
 All night by the white stars' frosty  
 gleams  
 He groined his arches and matched his  
 beams;  
 Slender and clear were his crystal spars  
 As the lashes of light that trim the  
 stars:  
 He sculptured every summer delight  
 In his halls and chambers out of sight;  
 Sometimes his tinkling waters slipt  
 Down through a frost-leaved forest-  
 crypt,  
 Long, sparkling aisles of steel-stemmed  
 trees  
 Bending to counterfeit a breeze;  
 Sometimes the roof no fretwork knew  
 But silvery mosses that downward grew;  
 Sometimes it was carved in sharp relief  
 With quaint arabesques of ice-fern leaf;  
 Sometimes it was simply smooth and  
 clear  
 For the gladness of heaven to shine  
 through, and here  
 He had caught the nodding bulrush-tops  
 And hung them thickly with diamond  
 drops,  
 That crystallised the beams of moon and  
 sun,  
 And made a star of every one:  
 No mortal builder's most rare device  
 Could match this winter-palace of ice;  
 'T was as if every image that mirrored  
 lay  
 In his depths serene through the sum-  
 mer day,

Each fleeting shadow of earth and sky,  
Lest the happy model should be lost,  
Had been mimicked in fairy masonry  
By the elfin builders of the frost.

Within the hall are song and laughter,  
The cheeks of Christmas glow red and  
jolly,

And sprouting is every corbel and rafter  
With lightsome green of ivy and holly ;  
Through the deep gulf of the chimney  
wide

Wallows the Yule-log's roaring tide ;  
The broad flame-pennons droop and flap  
And belly and tug as a flag in the  
wind ;

Like a locust shrills the imprisoned sap,  
Hunted to death in its galleries blind ;  
And swift little troops of silent sparks,  
Now pausing, now scattering away as  
in fear,

Go threading the soot-forest's tangled  
darks  
Like herds of startled deer.

But the wind without was eager and  
sharp,

Of Sir Launfal's gray hair it makes a harp,  
And rattles and wrings  
The icy strings,

Singing, in dreary monotone,  
A Christmas carol of its own,  
Whose burden still, as he might guess,  
Was — " Shelterless, shelterless, shel-  
terless ! "

The voice of the seneschal flared like a  
torch

As he shouted the wanderer away from  
the porch,

And he sat in the gateway and saw all  
night

The great hall-fire, so cheery and bold,  
Through the window-slits of the cas-  
tle old,

Build out its piers of ruddy light  
Against the drift of the cold.

## PART SECOND.

### I.

THERE was never a leaf on bush or tree,  
The bare boughs rattled shudderingly ;  
The river was dumb and could not speak,  
For the weaver Winter its shroud had  
spun ;

A single crow on the tree-top bleak  
From his shining feathers shed off the  
cold sun ;  
Again it was morning, but shrunk and  
cold,  
As if her veins were sapless and old,  
And she rose up decrepitley  
For a last dim look at earth and sea.

### II.

Sir Launfal turned from his own hard  
gate,

For another heir in his earldom sate ;  
An old, bent man, worn out and frail,  
He came back from seeking the Holy  
Grail ;

Little he recked of his earldom's loss,  
No more on his surcoat was blazoned the  
cross,

But deep in his soul the sign he wore,  
The badge of the suffering and the poor.

### III.

Sir Launfal's raiment thin and spare  
Was idle mail 'gainst the barbed air,  
For it was just at the Christmas time ;  
So he mused, as he sat, of a sunnier  
clime,

And sought for a shelter from cold and  
snow

In the light and warmth of long-ago ;  
He sees the snake-like caravan crawl  
O'er the edge of the desert, black and  
small,

Then nearer and nearer, till, one by one,  
He can count the camels in the sun,  
As over the red-hot sands they pass  
To where, in its slender necklace of grass,  
The little spring laughed and leapt in  
the shade,

And with its own self like an infant  
played,

And waved its signal of palms.

### IV.

" For Christ's sweet sake, I beg an  
alms " ; —

The happy camels may reach the spring,  
But Sir Launfal sees only the grewsome  
thing,

The leper, lank as the rain-blanch'd  
bone,

That covers beside him, a thing as lone  
And white as the ice-isles of Northern  
seas

In the desolate horror of his disease.



## v.

And Sir Launfal said,—“I behold in thee  
 An image of Him who died on the tree;  
 Thou also hast had thy crown of thorns,—  
 Thou also hast had the world's buffets and  
 scorns,—  
 And to thy life were not denied  
 The wounds in the hands and feet and  
 side:  
 Mild Mary's Son, acknowledge me;  
 Behold, through him, I give to thee!”

## vi.

Then the soul of the leper stood up in his  
 eyes  
 And looked at Sir Launfal, and  
 straightway he  
 Remembered in what a haughtier guise  
 He had flung an alms to leprosie,  
 When he girt his young life up in gilded  
 mail  
 And set forth in search of the Holy Grail.  
 The heart within him was ashes and dust;  
 He parted in twain his single crust,  
 He broke the ice on the streamlet's  
 brink,  
 And gave the leper to eat and drink,  
 'T was a mouldy crust of coarse brown  
 bread,  
 'T was water out of a wooden bowl,—  
 Yet with fine wheaten bread was the leper  
 fed,  
 And 't was red wine he drank with his  
 thirsty soul.

## vii.

As Sir Launfal mused with a downcast  
 face,  
 A light shone round about the place;  
 The leper no longer crouched at his side,  
 But stood before him glorified,  
 Shining and tall and fair and straight  
 As the pillar that stood by the Beautiful  
 Gate,—  
 Himself the Gate whereby men can  
 Enter the temple of God in Man.

## viii.

His words were shed softer than leaves  
 from the pine,  
 And they fell on Sir Launfal as snows on  
 the brine,  
 That mingle their softness and quiet in  
 one

With the shaggy unrest they float down  
 upon;  
 And the voice that was softer than  
 silence said,  
 “Lo it is I, be not afraid!  
 In many climes, without avail,  
 Thou hast spent thy life for the Holy  
 Grail;  
 Behold, it is here,—this cup which thou  
 Didst fill at the streamlet for me but now;  
 This crust is my body broken for thee,  
 This water his blood that died on the  
 tree;  
 The Holy Supper is kept, indeed,  
 In whatso we share with another's need;  
 Not what we give, but what we share,  
 For the gift without the giver is bare;  
 Who gives himself with his alms feeds  
 three,  
 Himself, his hungering neighbor, and  
 me.”

## ix.

Sir Launfal awoke as from a swoond:  
 “The Grail in my castle here is found!  
 Hang my idle armor up on the wall,  
 Let it be the spider's banquet-hall;  
 He must be fenced with stronger mail  
 Who would seek and find the Holy  
 Grail.”

## x.

The castle gate stands open now,  
 And the wanderer is welcome to the  
 hall  
 As the hangbird is to the elm-tree bough;  
 No longer scowl the turrets tall,  
 The Summer's long siege at last is o'er;  
 When the first poor outcast went in at  
 the door,  
 She entered with him in disguise,  
 And mastered the fortress by surprise;  
 There is no spot she loves so well on  
 ground,  
 She lingers and smiles there the whole  
 year round;  
 The meanest serf on Sir Launfal's land  
 Has hall and bower at his command;  
 And there's no poor man in the North  
 Countree  
 But is lord of the earldom as much as he.

NOTE.—According to the mythology of the  
 Romancers, the San Greal, or Holy Grail, was  
 the cup out of which Jesus partook of the Last  
 Supper with his disciples. It was brought into  
 England by Joseph of Arimathea, and remained  
 there, an object of pilgrimage and adoration,

for many years in the keeping of his lineal descendants. It was incumbent upon those who had charge of it to be chaste in thought, word, and deed; but one of the keepers having broken this condition, the Holy Grail disappeared. From that time it was a favorite enterprise of the knights of Arthur's court to go in search of it. Sir Galahad was at last successful in finding it, as may be read in the seventeenth book of the Romance of King Arthur.

Tennyson has made Sir Galahad the subject of one of the most exquisite of his poems.

The plot (if I may give that name to anything so slight) of the foregoing poem is my own, and, to serve its purposes, I have enlarged the circle of competition in search of the miraculous cup in such a manner as to include, not only other persons than the heroes of the Round Table, but also a period of time subsequent to the supposed date of King Arthur's reign.

READER! *walk up at once (it will soon be too late)*  
*and buy at a perfectly ruinous rate*

A

# FABLE FOR CRITICS;

OR, BETTER,

*(I like, as a thing that the reader's first fancy may strike,  
an old-fashioned title-page,  
such as presents a tabular view of the volume's contents,)*

## A G L A N C E

AT A FEW OF OUR LITERARY PROGENIES

*(Mrs. Malaprop's word)*

FROM

THE TUB OF DIOGENES;

A VOCAL AND MUSICAL MEDLEY,

THAT IS,

A SERIES OF JOKES

**By A Wonderful Quiz,**

*who accompanies himself with a rub-a-dub-dub, full of spirit and grace,  
on the top of the tub.*

Set forth in October, the 31st day,  
In the year '48, G. P. Putnam, Broadway.



TO  
CHARLES F. BRIGGS,  
THIS VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

It being the commonest mode of procedure, I premise a few candid remarks

TO THE READER:—

This trifle, begun to please only myself and my own private fancy, was laid on the shelf. But some friends, who had seen it, induced me, by dint of saying they liked it, to put it in print. That is, having come to that very conclusion, I asked their advice when 't would make no confusion. For though (in the gentlest of ways) they had hinted it was scarce worth the while, I should doubtless have printed it.

I began it, intending a Fable, a frail, slender thing, rhyme-y-winged, with a sting in its tail. But, by addings and alterings not previously planned, digressions chance-hatched, like birds' eggs in the sand, and dawdlings to suit every whimsey's demand (always freeing the bird which I held in my hand, for the two perched, perhaps out of reach, in the tree),—it grew by degrees to the size which you see. I was like the old woman that carried the calf, and my neighbors, like hers, no doubt, wonder and laugh; and when, my strained arms with their grown burthen full, I call it my Fable, they call it a bull.

Having scrawled at full gallop (as far as that goes) in a style that is neither good verse nor bad prose, and being a person whom nobody knows, some people will say I am rather more free with my readers than it is becoming to be, that I seem to expect them to wait on my leisure in following wherever I wander at pleasure, that, in short, I take more than a young author's lawful ease, and laugh in a queer way so like Mephistopheles, that the Public will doubt, as they grope through my rhythm, if in truth I am making fun of them or *with* them.

So the excellent Public is hereby assured that the sale of my book is already secured. For there is not a poet throughout the whole land but will purchase a copy or two out of hand, in the fond expectation of being amused in it, by seeing his betters cut up and abused in it. Now, I find, by a pretty exact calculation, there are something like ten thousand bards in

the nation, of that special variety whom the Review and Magazine critics call *lofty* and *true*, and about thirty thousand (*this* tribe is increasing) of the kinds who are termed *full of promise* and *pleasing*. The Public will see by a glance at this schedule, that they cannot expect me to be over-sedulous about courting *them*, since it seems I have got enough fuel made sure of for boiling my pot.

As for such of our poets as find not their names mentioned once in my pages, with praises or blames, let them SEND IN THEIR CARDS, without further DELAY, to my friend G. P. PUTNAM, Esquire, in Broadway, where a LIST will be kept with the strictest regard to the day and the hour of receiving the card. Then, taking them up as I chance to have time (that is, if their names can be twisted in rhyme), I will honestly give each his PROPER POSITION, at the rate of ONE AUTHOR to each NEW EDITION. Thus a PREMIUM is offered sufficiently HIGH (as the magazines say when they tell their best lie) to induce bards to CLUB their resources and buy the balance of every edition, until they have all of them fairly been run through the mill.

One word to such readers (judicious and wise) as read books with something behind the mere eyes, of whom in the country, perhaps, there are two, including myself, gentle reader, and you. All the characters sketched in this slight *jeu d'esprit*, though, it may be, they seem, here and there, rather free, and drawn from a somewhat too cynical standpoint, are *meant* to be faithful, for that is the grand point, and none but an owl would feel sore at a rub from a jester who tells you, without any subterfuge, that he sits in Diogenes' tub.

#### A PRELIMINARY NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION,

though it well may be reckoned, of all composition, the species at once most delightful and healthy, is a thing which an author, unless he be wealthy and willing to

pay for that kind of delight, is not, in all instances, called on to write, though there are, it is said, who, their spirits to cheer, slip in a new title-page three times a year, and in this way snuff up an imaginary savor of that sweetest of dishes, the popular favor,—much as if a starved painter should fall to and treat the Ugo-lino inside to a picture of meat.

You remember (if not, pray turn backward and look) that, in writing the preface which ushered my book, I treated you, excellent Public, not merely with a cool disregard, but downright cavalierly. Now I would not take back the least thing I then said, though I thereby could butter both sides of my bread, for I never could see that an author owed ought to the people he solaced, diverted, or taught; and, as for mere fame, I have long ago learned that the persons by whom it is finally earned are those with whom *your* verdict weighed not a pin, unsustained by the higher court sitting within.

But I wander from what I intended to say,—that you have, namely, shown such a liberal way of thinking, and so much æsthetic perception of anonymous worth in the handsome reception you gave to my book, spite of some private piques (having bought the first thousand in barely two weeks), that I think, past a doubt, if you measured the phiz of yours most devotedly, Wonderful Quiz, you would find that its vertical section was shorter, by an inch and two tenths, or 'twixt that and a quarter.

You have watched a child playing—in those wondrous years when belief is not bound to the eyes and the ears, and the vision divine is so clear and unmarred, that each baker of pies in the dirt is a bard? Give a knife and a shingle, he fits out a fleet, and, on that little mud-puddle over the street, his fancy, in purest good faith, will make sail round the globe with a puff of his breath for a gale, will visit in barely ten minutes all climes, and do the Columbus-feat hundreds of times. Or, suppose the young poet fresh stored with delights from that Bible of childhood, the Arabian Nights, he will turn to a crony and cry, "Jack, let's play that I am a Genius!" Jacky straightway makes Aladdin's lamp out of a stone, and, for hours, they enjoy each his own supernatural powers. This is all very pretty and pleasant, but then suppose our two urchins have grown into men, and both have turned authors,—one says to his brother, "Let's play we're the American something or other,—say Homer or Sophocles, Goethe or Scott (only let them be big enough, no

matter what). Come, you shall be Byron or Pope, which you choose: I'll be Coleridge, and both shall write mutual reviews." So they both (as mere strangers) before many days send each other a cord of anonymous bays. Each, piling his epithets, smiles in his sleeve to see what his friend can be made to believe; each, reading the other's unbiased review, thinks—Here's pretty high praise, but no more than my due. Well, we laugh at them both, and yet make no great fuss when the same farce is acted to benefit us. Even I, who, if asked, scarce a month since, what Fudge meant, should have answered, the dear Public's critical judgment, begin to think sharp-witted Horace spoke sooth when he said, that the Public *sometimes* hit the truth.

In reading these lines, you perhaps have a vision of a person in pretty good health and condition; and yet, since I put forth my primary edition, I have been crushed, scorched, withered, used up and put down (by Smith with the cordial assistance of Brown), in all, if you put any faith in my rhymes, to the number of ninety-five several times, and, while I am writing,—I tremble to think of it, for I may at this moment be just on the brink of it,—Mollydostom, angry at being omitted, has begun a critique,—am I not to be pitied?\*

Now I shall not crush *them* since, indeed, for that matter, no pressure I know of could render them flatter; nor wither, nor scorch them,—no action of fire could make either them or their articles drier; nor waste time in putting them down—I am thinking not their own self-inflation will keep them from sinking; for there's this contradiction about the whole bevy,—though without the least weight, they are awfully heavy. No, my dear honest bore, *surdo fabulam narras*, they are no more to me than a rat in the arras. I can walk with the Doctor, get facts from the Don, or draw out the Lambish quintessence of John, and feel nothing more than a half-comic sorrow, to think that they all will be lying to-morrow tossed carelessly up on the waste-paper shelves, and forgotten by all but their half-dozen selves. Once snug in my attic, my fire in a roar, I leave the whole pack of them outside the door. With Hakluyt or Purchas I wander away to the black northern seas or barbaric Cathay; get *fou* with O'Shanter, and sober me then with that builder of brick-kilnish

\* The wise Scandinavians probably called their bards by the queer-looking title of *Skallt*, in a delicate way, as it were, just to hint to the world the hot water they always get into.



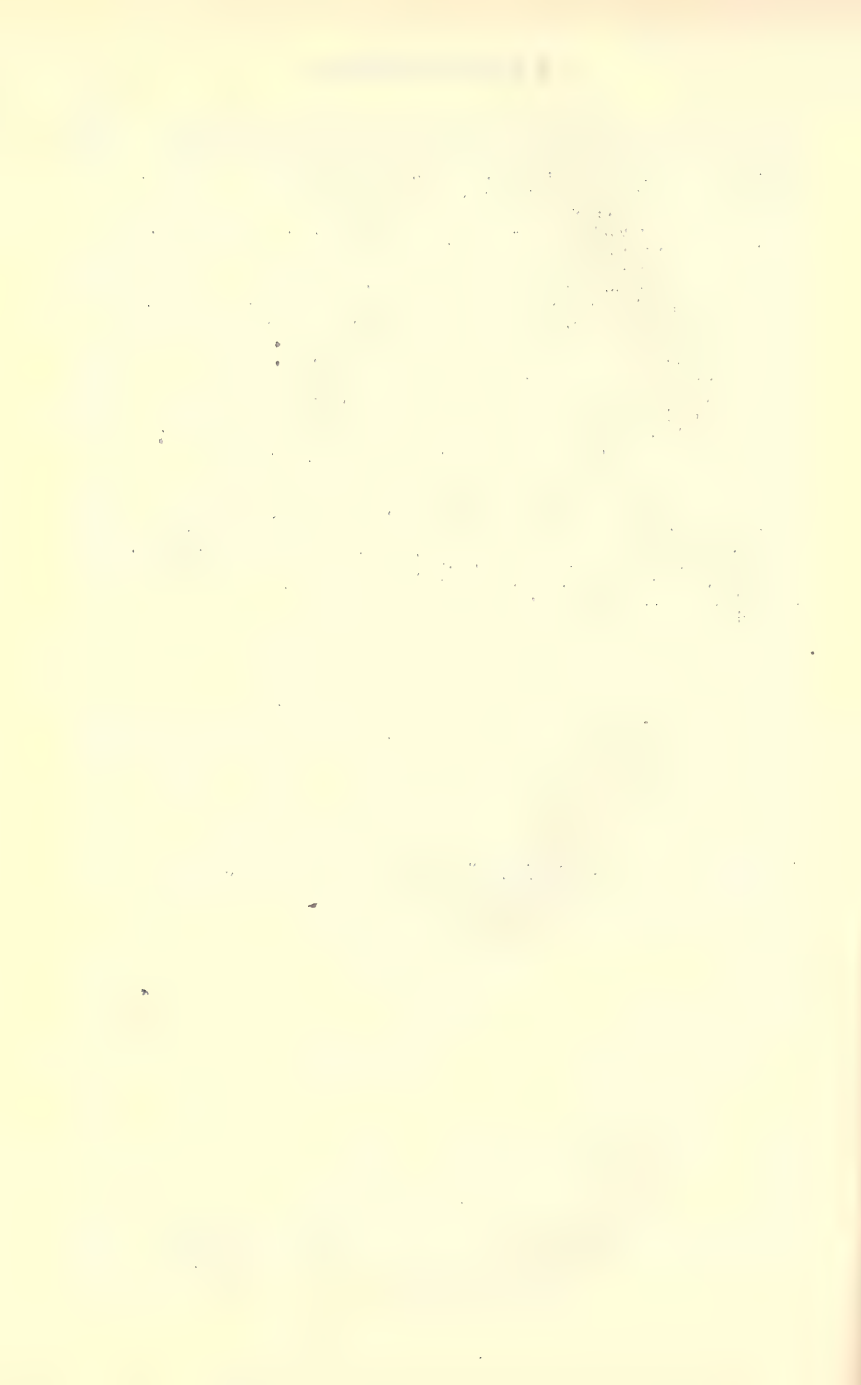
dramas, rare Ben ; snuff Herbert, as holy as a flower on a grave ; with Fletcher wax tender, o'er Chapman grow brave ; with Marlowe or Kyd take a fine poet-rave ; in Very, most Hebrew of Saxons, find peace ; with Lycidas welter on vext Irish seas ; with Webster grow wild, and climb earthward again, down by mystical Browne's Jacob's-ladder-like brain, to that spiritual Pepys (Cotton's version) Montaigne ; find a new depth in Wordsworth, undreamed of before, that marvel, a poet divine who can bore. Or, out of my study, the scholar thrown off, Nature holds up her shield 'gainst the sneer and the scoff ; the landscape, forever consoling and kind, pours her wine and her oil on the smarts of the mind. The waterfall, scattering its vanishing gems ; the tall grove of heinlocks, with moss on their stems, like splashes of sunlight ; the pond in the woods, where no foot but mine and the bittern's intrudes, where pitcher-plants purple and gentians hard by recall to September the blue of June's sky ; these are all my kind neighbors, and leave me no wish to say aught to you all, my poor critics, but — pish ! I've buried the hatchet : I'm twisting an allumette out of one of you now, and relighting my calumet. In your private capacities, come when you please, I will give you my hand and a fresh pipe apiece.

As I ran through the leaves of my poor little book, to take a fond author's first tremulous look, it was quite an excitement to hunt the *errata*, sprawled in as birds' tracks are in some kinds of strata (only these made things crooked). Fancy an heir that a father had seen born well-featured and fair, turning suddenly wry-nosed, club-footed, squint-eyed, hair-lipped, wapper-jawed, carrot-haired, from a pride become an aversion, — my case was yet worse. A club-foot (by way of a change! in a verse,

I might have forgiven, an o's being wry, a limp in an e, or a cock in an t, — but *te* have the sweet babe of my brain served in *pi* ! I am not queasy-stomached, but such a Thyesteau banquet as that was quite out of the question.

In the edition now issued no pains are neglected, and my verses, as orators say, stand corrected. Yet some blunders remain of the Public's own make, which I wish to correct for my personal sake. For instance, a character drawn in pure fun and condensing the traits of a dozen in one, has been, as I hear, by some persons applied to a good friend of mine, whom to stab in the side, as we walked along chatting and joking together, would not be *my* way. I can hardly tell whether a question will ever arise in which he and I should by any strange fortune agree, but meanwhile my esteem for him grows as I know him, and, though not the best judge on earth of a poem, he knows what it is he is saying and why, and is honest and fearless, two good points which I have not found so rife I can easily smother my love for them, whether on my side or t' other.

For my other *anonymi*, you may be sure that I know what is meant by a caricature, and what by a portrait. There *are* those who think it is capital fun to be spattering their ink on quiet, unquarrelsome folk, but the minute the game changes sides and the others begin it, they see something savage and horrible in it. As for me I respect neither women nor men for their gender, nor own any sex in a pen. I choose just to hint to some causeless unfriends that, as far as I know, there are always two ends (and one of them heaviest, too) to a staff, and two parties also to every good laugh.



## A FABLE FOR CRITICS.

---

PHŒBUS, sitting one day in a laurel-tree's shade,  
Was reminded of Daphne, of whom it was made,  
For the god being one day too warm in his wooing,  
She took to the tree to escape his pursuing ;  
Be the cause what it might, from his offers she shrunk,  
And, Ginevra-like, shut herself up in a trunk ;  
And, though 't was a step into which he had driven her,  
He somehow or other had never forgiven her ;  
Her memory he nursed as a kind of a tonic,  
Something bitter to chew when he'd play the Byronic,  
And I can't count the obstinate nymphs that he brought over  
By a strange kind of smile he put on when he thought of her.  
" My case is like Dido's," he sometimes remarked ;  
" When I last saw my love, she was fairly embarked  
In a laurel, as *she* thought — but (ah, how Fate mocks !)  
She has found it by this time a very bad box ;  
Let hunters from me take this saw when they need it, —  
You're not always sure of your game when you've treed it.  
Just conceive such a change taking place in one's mistress !  
What romance would be left ? — who can flatter or kiss trees ?  
And, for mercy's sake, how could one keep up a dialogue  
With a dull wooden thing that will live and will die a log, —

Not to say that the thought would forever intrude  
That you've less chance to win her the more she is wood ?  
Ah ! it went to my heart, and the memory still grieves,  
To see those loved graces all taking their leaves ;  
Those charms beyond speech, so enchanting but now,  
As they left me forever, each making its bough !  
If her tongue *had* a tang sometimes more than was right,  
Her new bark is worse than ten times her old bite."

Now, Daphne — before she was happily treeified —  
Over all other blossoms the lily had deified,  
And when she expected the god on a visit  
( 'T was before he had made his intentions explicit ),  
Some buds she arranged with a vast deal of care,  
To look as if artlessly twined in her hair,  
Where they seemed, as he said, when he paid his addresses,  
Like the day breaking through the long night of her tresses ;  
So whenever he wished to be quite irresistible,  
Like a man with eight trumps in his hand at a whist-table  
( I feared me at first that the rhyme was untwistable,  
Though I might have lugged in an allusion to *Cristabel* ), —  
He would take up a lily, and gloomily look in it,  
As I shall at the —, when they cut up my book in it.



Well, here, after all the bad rhyme  
 I've been spinning,  
 I've got back at last to my story's begin-  
 ning :  
 Sitting there, as I say, in the shade of  
 his mistress,  
 As dull as a volume of old Chester mys-  
 teries,  
 Or as those puzzling specimens which,  
 in old histories,  
 We read of his verses — the Oracles,  
 namely, —  
 (I wonder the Greeks should have swal-  
 lowed them tamely,  
 For one might bet safely whatever he  
 has to risk,  
 They were laid at his door by some  
 ancient Miss Asterisk,  
 And so dull that the men who retailed  
 them out-doors  
 Got the ill name of angurs, because  
 they were bores, —)  
 First, he mused what the animal sub-  
 stance or herb is  
 Would induce a mustache, for you  
 know he's *imberbis* ;  
 Then he shuddered to think how his  
 youthful position  
 Was assailed by the age of his son the  
 physician ;  
 At some poems he glanced, had been  
 sent to him lately,  
 And the metre and sentiment puzzled  
 him greatly ;  
 "Mehercle ! I'd make such proceed-  
 ing felonious, —  
 Have they all of them slept in the cave  
 of Trophonius ?  
 Look well to your seat, 't is like taking  
 an airing  
 On a corduroy road, and that out of re-  
 pairing ;  
 It leads one, 't is true, through the  
 primitive forest,  
 Grand natural features, but then one  
 has no rest ;  
 You just catch a glimpse of some rav-  
 ishing distance,  
 When a jolt puts the whole of it out of  
 existence, —  
 Why not use their ears, if they happen  
 to have any ?"  
 — Here the laurel-leaves murmured the  
 name of poor Daphne.

"O, weep with me, Daphne," he  
 sighed, "for you know it's

A terrible thing to be pestered with  
 poets !  
 But, alas, she is dumb, and the proverb  
 holds good,  
 She never will cry till she's out of the  
 wood !  
 What would n't I give if I never had  
 known of her ?  
 'T were a kind of relief had I something  
 to groan over :  
 If I had but some letters of hers, now,  
 to toss over,  
 I might turn for the nonce a Byronic  
 philosopher,  
 And bewitch all the flats by bemoaning  
 the loss of her.  
 One needs something tangible, though,  
 to begin on, —  
 A loom, as it were, for the fancy to  
 spin on ;  
 What boots all your grist ? it can never  
 be ground  
 Till a breeze makes the arms of the  
 windmill go round,  
 (Or, if 't is a water-mill, alter the meta-  
 phor,  
 And say it won't stir, save the wheel be  
 well wet afore,  
 Or lug in some stuff about water "so  
 dreamily," —  
 It is not a metaphor, though, 't is a  
 simile) ;  
 A lily, perhaps, would set *my* mill  
 a-going,  
 For just at this season, I think, they  
 are blowing.  
 Here, somebody, fetch one ; not very  
 far hence  
 They're in bloom by the score, 't is but  
 climbing a fence ;  
 There's a poet hard by, who does nothing  
 but fill his  
 Whole garden, from one end to 't other,  
 with lilies ;  
 A very good plan, were it not for sati-  
 ety,  
 One longs for a weed here and there,  
 for variety ;  
 Though a weed is no more than a flower  
 in disguise,  
 Which is seen through at once, if love  
 give a man eyes."

Now there happened to be among  
 Phœbus's followers,  
 A gentleman, one of the omnivorous  
 swallows,

Who bolt every book that comes out of  
 the press,  
 Without the least question of larger or  
 less,  
 Whose stomachs are strong at the ex-  
 pense of their head,—  
 For reading new books is like eating  
 new bread,  
 One can bear it at first, but by gradual  
 steps he  
 Is brought to death's door of a mental  
 dyspepsy.  
 On a previous stage of existence, our  
 Hero  
 Had ridden outside, with the glass be-  
 low zero;  
 He had been, 't is a fact you may safely  
 rely on,  
 Of a very old stock a most eminent  
 scion,—  
 A stock all fresh quacks their fierce  
 boluses ply on,  
 Who stretch the new boots Earth's un-  
 willing to try on,  
 Whom humbugs of all shapes and sorts  
 keep their eye on.  
 Whose hair's in the mortar of every  
 new Zion,  
 Who, when whistles are dear, go directly  
 and buy one,  
 Who think slavery a crime that we  
 must not say fie on,  
 Who hunt, if they e'er hunt at all, with  
 the lion  
 (Though they hunt lions also, whenever  
 they spy one),  
 Who contrive to make every good for-  
 tune a wry one,  
 And at last choose the hard bed of honor  
 to die on,  
 Whose pedigree, traced to earth's earli-  
 est years,  
 Is longer than anything else but their  
 ears;—  
 In short, he was sent into life with the  
 wrong key,  
 He unlocked the door, and stept forth  
 a poor donkey.  
 Though kicked and abused by his bi-  
 pedal betters  
 Yet he filled no mean place in the king-  
 dom of letters;  
 Far happier than many a literary hack,  
 He bore only paper-mill rags on his  
 back  
 (For it makes a vast difference which  
 side the mill

One expends on the paper his labor and  
 skill);  
 So, when his soul waited a new trans-  
 migration,  
 And Destiny balanced 'twixt this and  
 that station,  
 Not having much time to expend upon  
 bothers,  
 Remembering he'd had some connec-  
 tion with authors,  
 And considering his four legs had grown  
 paralytic,—  
 She set him on two, and he came forth  
 a critic.

Through his babyhood no kind of  
 pleasure he took  
 In any amusement but tearing a book;  
 For him there was no intermediate stage  
 From babyhood up to straight-laced  
 middle age;  
 There were years when he did n't wear  
 coat-tails behind,  
 But a boy he could never be rightly de-  
 fined;  
 Like the Irish Good Folk, though in  
 length scarce a span,  
 From the womb he came gravely, a lit-  
 tle old man;  
 While other boys' trousers demanded  
 the toil  
 Of the motherly fingers on all kinds of  
 soil,  
 Red, yellow, brown, black, clayey,  
 gravelly, loamy,  
 He sat in the corner and read Viri  
 Romæ.  
 He never was known to unbend or to  
 revel once  
 In base, marbles, hockey, or kick up  
 the devil once;  
 He was just one of those who excite the  
 benevolence  
 Of your old prisgs who sound the soul's  
 depths with a ledger,  
 And are on the lookout for some young  
 men to "edger-  
 cate," as they call it, who won't be too  
 costly,  
 And who 'll afterward take to the min-  
 istry mostly;  
 Who always wear spectacles, always  
 look bilious,  
 Always keep on good terms with each  
*mater-familias*  
 Throughout the whole parish, and man-  
 age to rear

Ten boys like themselves, on four hundred a year :

Who, fulfilling in turn the same fearful conditions,

Either preach through their noses, or go upon missions.

In this way our Hero got safely to college,

Where he bolted alike both his commons and knowledge ;

A reading-machine, always wound up and going,

He mastered whatever was not worth the knowing,

Appeared in a gown, and a vest of black satin,

To spout such a Gothic oration in Latin That Tully could never have made out a word in it

(Though himself was the model the author preferred in it),

And grasping the parchment which gave him in fee

All the mystic and-so-forths contained in A. B.,

He was launched (life is always compared to a sea)

With just enough learning, and skill for the using it,

To prove he 'd a brain, by forever confusing it.

So worthy St. Benedict, piously burning

With the holiest zeal against secular learning,

*Nesciensque scienter*, as writers express it,

*Indoctusque sapienter a Roma recessit.*

'T would be endless to tell you the things that he knew,

Each a separate fact, undeniably true, But with him or each other they 'd nothing to do ;

No power of combining, arranging, discerning,

Digested the masses he learned into learning ;

There was one thing in life he had practical knowledge for

(And this, you will think, he need scarce go to college for), —

Not a deed would he do, nor a word would he utter,

Till he 'd weighed its relations to plain bread and butter.

When he left Alma Mater, he practised his wits

In compiling the journals' historical bits, —

Of shops broken open, men falling in fits,

Great fortunes in England bequeathed to poor printers,

And cold spells, the coldest for many past winters, —

Then, rising by industry, knack, and address,

Got notices up for an unbiassed press, With a mind so well poised, it seemed equally made for

Applause or abuse, just which chanced to be paid for :

From this point his progress was rapid and sure,

To the post of a regular heavy reviewer.

And here I must say he wrote excellent articles

On Hebraical points, or the force of Greek particles ;

They filled up the space nothing else was prepared for,

And nobody read that which nobody cared for ;

If any old book reached a fiftieth edition,

He could fill forty pages with safe erudition :

He could gauge the old books by the old set of rules,

And his very old nothings pleased very old fools ;

But give him a new book, fresh out of the heart,

And you put him at sea without compass or chart, —

His blunders aspired to the rank of an art ;

For his lore was engraft, something foreign that grew in him,

Exhausting the sap of the native and true in him,

So that when a man came with a soul that was new in him,

Carving new forms of truth out of Nature's old granite,

New and old at their birth, like Le Verrier's planet,

Which, to get a true judgment, themselves must create

In the soul of their critic the measure and weight,



Being rather themselves a fresh stand-  
ard of grace,  
To compute their own judge, and assign  
him his place,  
Our reviewer would crawl all about it  
and round it,  
And, reporting each circumstance just  
as he found it,  
Without the least malice, — his record  
would be  
Profoundly æsthetic as that of a flea,  
Which, supping on Wordsworth, should  
print, for our sakes,  
Recollections of nights with the Bard of  
the Lakes,  
Or, lodged by an Arab guide, ventured  
to render a  
Comprehensive account of the ruins at  
Denderah.

As I said, he was never precisely un-  
kind,  
The defect in his brain was just absence  
of mind ;  
If he boasted, 't was simply that he was  
self-made,  
A position which I, for one, never gain-  
said,  
My respect for my Maker supposing a  
skill  
In His works which our Hero would an-  
swer but ill ;  
And I trust that the mould which he  
used may be cracked, or he,  
Made bold by success, may enlarge his  
phylactery,  
And set up a kind of a man-manufac-  
tory, —  
An event which I shudder to think  
about, seeing  
That Man is a moral, accountable being.

He meant well enough, but was still  
in the way,  
As dunces still are, let them be where  
they may ;  
Indeed, they appear to come into exist-  
ence  
To impede other folks with their awk-  
ward assistance ;  
If you set up a dunce on the very North  
pole  
All alone with himself, I believe, on my  
soul,  
He'd manage to get betwixt somebody's  
shins,  
And pitch him down bodily, all in his  
sins,

To the grave polar bears sitting round  
on the ice,  
All shortening their grace, to be in for  
a slice ;  
Or, if he found nobody else there to  
pother,  
Why, one of his legs would just trip up  
the other,  
For there's nothing we read of in tor-  
ture's inventions,  
Like a well-meaning dunce, with the  
best of intentions.

A terrible fellow to meet in soci-  
ety,  
Not the toast that he buttered was ever  
so dry at tea ;  
There he'd sit at the table and stir in  
his sugar,  
Crouching close for a spring, all the  
while, like a cougar ;  
Be sure of your facts, of your measures  
and weights,  
Of your time, — he's as fond as an Arab  
of dates ;  
You'll be telling, perhaps, in your comi-  
cal way,  
Of something you've seen in the course  
of the day ;  
And, just as you're tapering out the  
conclusion,  
You venture an ill-fated classic allu-  
sion, —  
The girls have all got their laughs ready,  
when, whack !  
The cougar comes down on your thun-  
derstruck back !  
You had left out a comma, — your  
Greek's put in joint,  
And pointed at cost of your story's  
whole point.  
In the course of the evening you find  
chance for certain  
Soft speeches to Anne, in the shade of  
the curtain :  
You tell her your heart can be likened  
to one flower,  
“ And that, O most charming of wom-  
en's the sunflower,  
Which turns ” — here a clear nasal voice,  
to your terror,  
From outside the curtain, says, “ That's  
all an error.”  
As for him, he's — no matter, he never  
grew tender,  
Sitting after a ball, with his feet on the  
fender,

Shaping somebody's sweet features out  
 of cigar smoke  
 (Though he'd willingly grant you that  
 such doings are smoke);  
 All women he damns with *mutabile*  
*semper*,  
 And if ever he felt something like love's  
 distemper,  
 'T was tow'rd's a young lady who spoke  
 ancient Mexican,  
 And assisted her father in making a lex-  
 icon;  
 Though I recollect hearing him get  
 quite ferocious  
 About Mary Clausum, the mistress of  
 Grotius,  
 Or something of that sort, — but, no  
 more to bore ye  
 With character-painting, I'll turn to  
 my story.

Now, Apollo, who finds it conven-  
 ient sometimes  
 To get his court clear of the makers of  
 rhymes,  
 The *genus*, I think it is called, *irritabile*,  
 Every one of whom thinks himself  
 treated most shabbily,  
 And nurses a — what is it? — *immedi-*  
*cabile*,  
 Which keeps him at boiling-point, hot  
 for a quarrel,  
 As bitter as wormwood, and sourer than  
 sorrel,  
 If any poor devil but look at a laurel; —  
 Apollo, I say, being sick of their riot-  
 ing  
 (Though he sometimes acknowledged  
 their verse had a quieting  
 Effect after dinner, and seemed to sug-  
 gest a  
 Retreat to the shrine of a tranquil  
 siesta),  
 Kept our Hero at hand, who, by means  
 of a bray,  
 Which he gave to the life, drove the  
 rabble away;  
 And if that would n't do, he was sure  
 to succeed,  
 If he took his review out and offered to  
 read;  
 Or, failing in plans of this milder de-  
 scription,  
 He would ask for their aid to get up a  
 subscription,  
 Considering that authorship was n't a  
 rich craft,

To print the "American drama of  
 Witchcraft."  
 "Stay, I'll read you a scene," — but he  
 hardly began,  
 Ere Apollo shrieked "Help!" and the  
 authors all ran:  
 And once, when these purgatives acted  
 with less spirit,  
 And the desperate case asked a remedy  
 desperate,  
 He drew from his pocket a foolscap  
 epistle  
 As calmly as if 't were a nine-barrelled  
 pistol,  
 And threatened them all with the judg-  
 ment to come,  
 Of "A wandering Star's first impressions  
 of Rome."  
 "Stop! stop!" with their hands o'er  
 their ears, screamed the Muses,  
 "He may go off and murder himself, if  
 he chooses,  
 'T was a means self-defence only sanc-  
 tioned his trying,  
 'T is mere massacre now that the ene-  
 my's flying;  
 If he's forced to 't again, and we hap-  
 pen to be there,  
 Give us each a large handkerchief soaked  
 in strong ether."

I called this a "Fable for Critics";  
 you think it's  
 More like a display of my rhythmical  
 trinkets;  
 My plot, like an icicle, 's slender and  
 slippery,  
 Every moment more slender, and likely  
 to slip away,  
 And the reader unwilling *in loco desipere*  
 Is free to jump over as much of my  
 frippery  
 As he fancies, and, if he's a provident  
 skipper, he  
 May have like Odysseus control of the  
 gales,  
 And get safe to port, ere his patience  
 quite fails;  
 Moreover, although 't is a slender return  
 For your toil and expense, yet my paper  
 will burn,  
 And, if you have manfully struggled  
 thus far with me,  
 You may e'en twist me up, and just  
 light your cigar with me:  
 If too angry for that, you can tear me in  
 pieces,

And my *membra disjecta* consign to the breezes,  
 A fate like great Ratzau's, whom one of those bores,  
 Who bellead with bad verses poor Louis Quatorze,  
 Describes (the first verse somehow ends with *victoire*),  
 As *dispersant partout et ses membres et sa gloire* ;  
 Or, if I were over-desirous of earning  
 A repute among noodles for classical learning,  
 I could pick you a score of allusions, I wis,  
 As new as the jests of *Didaskalos tis* ;  
 Better still, I could make out a good solid list  
 From authors *recondite* who do not exist, —  
 But that would be naughty: at least, I could twist  
 Something out of Absyrtus, or turn your inquiries  
 After Milton's prose metaphor, drawn from Osiris ;—  
 But, as Cicero says he won't say this or that  
 (A fetch, I must say, most transparent and flat),  
 After saying whate'er he could possibly think of, —  
 I simply will state that I pause on the brink of  
 A mire, ankle-deep, of deliberate confusion,  
 Made up of old jumbles of classic allusion :  
 So, when you were thinking yourselves to be pitied,  
 Just conceive how much harder your teeth you'd have gritted,  
 An 't were not for the dulness I've kindly omitted.

I'd apologize here for my many digressions,  
 Were it not that I'm certain to trip into fresh ones  
 ('Tis so hard to escape if you get in their mesh once) ;  
 Just reflect, if you please, how 't is said by Horatius,  
 That Mæonides nods now and then, and, my gracious !  
 It certainly does look a little bit ominous

When he gets under way with *ton d'apanneibomenos*.  
 (Here a something occurs which I'll just clap a rhyme to,  
 And say it myself, ere a Zoilus have time to, —  
 Any author a nap like Van Winkle's may take,  
 If he only contrive to keep readers awake,  
 But he'll very soon find himself laid on the shelf,  
 If *they* fall a-nodding when he nods himself.)

Once for all, to return, and to stay, will I, nill I —  
 When Phœbus expressed his desire for a lily,  
 Our hero, whose homœopathic sagacity  
 With an ocean of zeal mixed his drop of capacity,  
 Set off for the garden as fast as the wind  
 (Or, to take a comparison more to my mind,  
 As a sound politician leaves conscience behind),  
 And leaped the low fence, as a party hack jumps  
 O'er his principles, when something else turns up trumps.

He was gone a long time, and Apollo, meanwhile,  
 Went over some sonnets of his with a file,  
 For, of all compositions, he thought that the sonnet  
 Best repaid all the toil you expended upon it ;  
 It should reach with one impulse the end of its course,  
 And for one final blow collect all of its force ;  
 Not a verse should be salient, but each one should tend  
 With a wave-like up-gathering to break at the end ;  
 So, condensing the strength here, there smoothing a wry kink,  
 He was killing the time, when up walked Mr. D — ;  
 At a few steps behind him, a small man in glasses  
 Went dodging about, muttering, " Murderers ! asses !"  
 From out of his pocket a paper he'd take,



With a proud look of martyrdom tied to  
its stake,  
And, reading a squib at himself, he'd  
say, "Here I see  
'Gainst American letters a bloody con-  
spiracy,  
They are all by my personal enemies  
written ;  
I must post an anonymous letter to  
Britain,  
And show that this gall is the merest  
suggestion  
Of spite on my zeal on the Copyright  
question,  
For, on this side the water, 't is prudent  
to pull  
O'er the eyes of the public their national  
wool,  
By accusing of slavish respect to John  
Bull  
All American authors who have more or  
less  
Of that anti-American humbug — suc-  
cess,  
While in private we're always em-  
bracing the knees  
Of some twopenny editor over the seas,  
And licking his critical shoes, for you  
know 't is  
The whole aim of our lives to get one  
English notice ;  
My American puffs I would willingly  
burn all  
(They're all from one source, monthly,  
weekly, diurnal)  
To get but a kick from a transmarine  
journal !"

So, culling the gibes of each critical  
scorner  
As if they were plums, and himself were  
Jack Horner,  
He came cautiously on, peeping round  
every corner,  
And into each hole where a weasel might  
pass in,  
Expecting the knife of some critic as-  
sassin,  
Who stabs to the heart with a caricature,  
Not so bad as those daubs of the Sun,  
to be sure,  
Yet done with a dagger-o'-type, whose  
vile portraits  
Disperse all one's good and condense all  
one's poor traits.  
Apollo looked up, hearing footsteps  
approaching,

And slipped out of sight the new rhymes  
he was broaching, —  
"Good day, Mr. D——, I'm happy to  
meet,  
With a scholar so ripe, and a critic so  
neat,  
Who through Grub Street the soul of a  
gentleman carries ;  
What news from that suburb of London  
and Paris  
Which latterly makes such shrill claims  
to monopolize  
The credit of being the New World's  
metropolis ?"

"Why, nothing of consequence, save  
this attack  
On my friend there, behind, by some  
pitiful hack,  
Who thinks every national author a poor  
one,  
That is n't a copy of something that's  
foreign,  
And assaults the American Dick —"

"Nay, 't is clear  
That your Damon there's fond of a flea  
in his ear,  
And, if no one else furnished them gra-  
tis, on tick  
He would buy some himself, just to hear  
the old click ;  
Why, I honestly think, if some fool in  
Japan  
Should turn up his nose at the 'Poems  
on Man,'  
(Which contain many verses as fine, by  
the bye,  
As any that lately came under my eye.)  
Your friend there by some inward in-  
stinct would know it,  
Would get it translated, reprinted, and  
show it ;  
As a man might take off a high stock to  
exhibit  
The autograph round his own neck of  
the gibbet ;  
Nor would let it rest so, but fire column  
after column,  
Signed Cato, or Brutus, or something as  
solemn,  
By way of displaying his critical crosses,  
And tweaking that poor transatlantic  
proboscis,  
His broadsides resulting (this last there's  
no doubt of)  
In successively sinking the craft they're  
fired out of.

Now nobody knows when an author is  
hit,  
If he have not a public hysterical fit ;  
Let him only keep close in his snug  
garret's dim ether,  
And nobody'd think of his foes — or of  
him either ;  
If an author have any least fibre of  
worth in him,  
Abuse would but tickle the organ of  
mirth in him ;  
All the critics on earth cannot crush  
with their ban  
One word that 's in tune with the nature  
of man."

" Well, perhaps so ; meanwhile I have  
brought you a book,  
Into which if you 'll just have the good-  
ness to look,  
You may feel so delighted (when once  
you are through it)  
As to deem it not unworth your while  
to review it,  
And I think I can promise your thoughts,  
if you do,  
A place in the next Democratic Review."

" The most thankless of gods you must  
surely have thought me,  
For this is the forty-fourth copy you've  
brought me,  
I have given them away, or at least I  
have tried,  
But I've forty-two left, standing all side  
by side  
(The man who accepted that one copy  
died), —  
From one end of a shelf to the other  
they reach,  
' With the author's respects ' neatly  
written in each.  
The publisher, sure, will proclaim a Te  
Deum,  
When he hears of that order the British  
Museum  
Has sent for one set of what books were  
first printed  
In America, little or big, — for 't is  
hinted  
That this is the first truly tangible hope  
he  
Has ever had raised for the sale of a copy.  
I've thought very often 't would be a  
good thing  
In all public collections of books, if a  
wing

Were set off by itself, like the seas from  
the dry lands,  
Marked *Literature suited to desolate  
islands*,  
And filled with such books as could  
never be read  
Save by readers of proofs, forced to do it  
for bread, —  
Such books as one's wrecked on in small  
country-taverns,  
Such as hermits might mortify over in  
caverns,  
Such as Satan, if printing had then been  
invented,  
As the climax of woe, would to Job have  
presented,  
Such as Crusoe might dip in, although  
there are few so  
Outrageously cornered by fate as poor  
Crusoe ;  
And since the philanthropists just now  
are banging  
And gibbeting all who're in favor of  
hanging  
(Though Cheever has proved that the  
Bible and Altar  
Were let down from Heaven at the end  
of a halter,  
And that vital religion would dull and  
grow callous,  
Unrefreshed, now and then, with a sniff  
of the gallows), —  
And folks are beginning to think it looks  
odd,  
To choke a poor scamp for the glory of  
God ;  
And that He who esteems the Virginia reel  
A bait to draw saints from their spiritual  
weal,  
And regards the quadrille as a far greater  
knavery  
Than crushing His African children  
with slavery, —  
Since all who take part in a waltz or  
cotillon  
Are mounted for hell on the Devil's own  
pillion,  
Who, as every true orthodox Christian  
well knows,  
Approaches the heart through the door  
of the toes, —  
That He, I was saying, whose judgments  
are stored  
For such as take steps in despite of His  
word,  
Should look with delight on the ago-  
nized prancing

Of a wretch who has not the least ground  
 for his dancing,  
 While the State, standing by, sings a  
 verse from the Psalter  
 About offering to God on His favorite  
 halter,  
 And, when the legs droop from their  
 twitching divergence,  
 Sells the clothes to a Jew, and the  
 corpse to the surgeons;—  
 Now, instead of all this, I think I can  
 direct you all  
 To a criminal code both humane and  
 effectual;—  
 I propose to shut up every doer of  
 wrong  
 With these desperate books, for such  
 term, short or long,  
 As by statute in such cases made and  
 provided,  
 Shall be by your wise legislators de-  
 cided:  
 Thus: Let murderers be shut, to grow  
 wiser and cooler,  
 At hard labor for life on the works of  
 Miss—;  
 Petty thieves, kept from flagrant  
 crimes by their fears,  
 Shall peruse Yankee Doodle a blank  
 term of years, —  
 That American Punch, like the English,  
 no doubt, —  
 Just the sugar and lemons and spirit  
 left out.

“But stay, here comes Tityrus Gris-  
 wold, and leads on  
 The flocks whom he first plucks alive,  
 and then feeds on, —  
 A loud-cackling swarm, in whose feath-  
 ers warm-drest,  
 He goes for as perfect a — swan as the  
 rest.

“There comes Emerson first, whose  
 rich words, every one,  
 Are like gold nails in temples to hang  
 trophies on,  
 Whose prose is grand verse, while his  
 verse, the Lord knows,  
 Is some of it pr— No, 't is not even  
 prose;  
 I'm speaking of metres; some poems  
 have welled  
 From those rare depths of soul that have  
 ne'er been excelled;

They're not epics, but that does n't  
 matter a pin,  
 In creating, the only hard thing's to  
 begin;  
 A grass-blade's no easier to make than  
 an oak;  
 If you've once found the way, you've  
 achieved the grand stroke;  
 In the worst of his poems are mines of  
 rich matter,  
 But thrown in a heap with a crush and  
 a clatter;  
 Now it is not one thing nor another alone  
 Makes a poem, but rather the general  
 tone,  
 The something pervading, uniting the  
 whole,  
 The before unconceived, unconceivable  
 soul,  
 So that just in removing this trifle or  
 that, you  
 Take away, as it were, a chief limb of  
 the statue;  
 Roots, wood, bark, and leaves singly  
 perfect may be,  
 But, clapt hodge-podge together, they  
 don't make a tree.

“But, to come back to Emerson (whom,  
 by the way,  
 I believe we left waiting), — his is, we  
 may say,  
 A Greek head on right Yankee shoul-  
 ders, whose range  
 Has Olympus for one pole, for t' other  
 the Exchange;  
 He seems, to my thinking (although I'm  
 afraid  
 The comparison must, long ere this, have  
 been made),  
 A Plotinus-Montaigne, where the Egyp-  
 tian's gold mist  
 And the Gascon's shrewd wit cheek-by-  
 jowl coexist;  
 All admire, and yet scarcely six converts  
 he's got  
 To I don't (nor they either) exactly  
 know what;  
 For though he builds glorious temples,  
 't is odd  
 He leaves never a doorway to get in a  
 god.  
 'T is refreshing to old-fashioned people  
 like me  
 To meet such a primitive Pagan as he,  
 In whose mind all creation is duly re-  
 spected



As parts of himself — just a little projected ;  
 And who's willing to worship the stars  
 and the sun,  
 A convert to — nothing but Emerson.  
 So perfect a balance there is in his  
 head,  
 That he talks of things sometimes as if  
 they were dead ;  
 Life, nature, love, God, and affairs of  
 that sort,  
 He looks at as merely ideas ; in short,  
 As if they were fossils stuck round in a  
 cabinet,  
 Of such vast extent that our earth's a  
 mere dab in it ;  
 Composed just as he is inclined to con-  
 jecture her,  
 Namely, one part pure earth, ninety-nine  
 parts pure lecturer ;  
 You are filled with delight at his clear  
 demonstration,  
 Each figure, word, gesture, just fits the  
 occasion,  
 With the quiet precision of science he'll  
 sort 'em  
 But you can't help suspecting the whole  
 a *post mortem*.

“ There are persons, mole-blind to the  
 soul's make and style,  
 Who insist on a likeness 'twixt him and  
 Carlyle ;  
 To compare him with Plato would be  
 vastly fairer,  
 Carlyle's the more burly, but E. is the  
 rarer ;  
 He sees fewer objects, but clearer, true-  
 lier,  
 If C.'s as original, E.'s more peculiar ;  
 That he's more of a man you might say  
 of the one,  
 Of the other he's more of an Emerson ;  
 C.'s the Titan, as shaggy of mind as of  
 limb, —  
 E. the clear-eyed Olympian, rapid and  
 slim ;  
 The one's two thirds Norseman, the  
 other half Greek,  
 Where the one's most abounding, the  
 other's to seek ;  
 C.'s generals require to be seen in the  
 mass, —  
 E.'s specialties gain if enlarged by the  
 glass ;  
 C. gives nature and God his own fits of  
 the blues,

And rims common-sense things with  
 mystical hues, —  
 E. sits in a mystery calm and intense,  
 And looks coolly around him with sharp  
 common-sense ;  
 C. shows you how every-day matters  
 unite  
 With the dim transdiurnal recesses of  
 night, —  
 While E., in a plain, preternatural way,  
 Makes mysteries matters of mere every  
 day ;  
 C. draws all his characters quite *à la*  
 Fuseli, —  
 Not sketching their bundles of muscles  
 and thews illy,  
 He paints with a brush so untamed and  
 profuse,  
 They seem nothing but bundles of mus-  
 cles and thews ;  
 E. is rather like Flaxman, lines strait  
 and severe,  
 And a colorless outline, but full, round,  
 and clear ; —  
 To the men he thinks worthy he frankly  
 accords  
 The design of a white marble statue in  
 words.  
 C. labors to get at the centre, and  
 then  
 Take a reckoning from there of his ac-  
 tions and men ;  
 E. calmly assumes the said centre as  
 granted,  
 And, given himself, has whatever is  
 wanted.

“ He has imitators in scores, who omit  
 No part of the man but his wisdom and  
 wit, —  
 Who go carefully o'er the sky-blue of  
 his brain,  
 And when he has skimmed it once,  
 skim it again ;  
 If at all they resemble him, you may be  
 sure it is  
 Because their shoals mirror his mists  
 and obscurities,  
 As a mud-puddle seems deep as heaven  
 for a minute,  
 While a cloud that floats o'er is reflected  
 within it.

“ There comes —, for instance ; to  
 see him's rare sport,  
 Tread in Emerson's tracks with legs pain-  
 fully short ;

How he jumps, how he strains, and gets  
 red in the face,  
 To keep step with the mystagogue's  
 natural pace!  
 He follows as close as a stick to a rock-  
 et,  
 His fingers exploring the prophet's each  
 pocket.  
 Fie, for shame, brother bard; with good  
 fruit of your own,  
 Can't you let Neighbor Emerson's or-  
 chards alone?  
 Besides, 't is no use, you'll not find e'en  
 a core,—  
 — has picked up all the windfalls be-  
 fore.  
 They might strip every tree, and E.  
 never would catch 'em,  
 His Hesperides have no rude dragon to  
 watch 'em;  
 When they send him a dishful, and ask  
 him to try 'em,  
 He never suspects how the sly rogues  
 came by 'em;  
 He wonders why 't is there are none  
 such his trees on,  
 And thinks 'em the best he has tasted  
 this season.

“Yonder, calm as a cloud, Alcott  
 stalks in a dream,  
 And fancies himself in thy groves, Aca-  
 deme,  
 With the Parthenon nigh, and the olive-  
 trees o'er him,  
 And never a fact to perplex him or bore  
 him,  
 With a snug room at Plato's when night  
 comes, to walk to,  
 And people from morning till midnight  
 to talk to,  
 And from midnight till morning, nor  
 snore in their listening;—  
 So he muses, his face with the joy of it  
 glistening,  
 For his highest conceit of a happiest  
 state is  
 Where they'd live upon acorns, and hear  
 him talk gratis;  
 And indeed, I believe, no man ever  
 talked better,—  
 Each sentence hangs perfectly poised to  
 a letter;  
 He seems piling words, but there's royal  
 dust hid  
 In the heart of each sky-piercing pyra-  
 mid.

While he talks he is great, but goes out  
 like a taper,  
 If you shut him up closely with pen, ink,  
 and paper;  
 Yet his fingers itch for 'em from morning  
 till night,  
 And he thinks he does wrong if he don't  
 always write;  
 In this, as in all things, a lamb among  
 men,  
 He goes to sure death when he goes to  
 his pen.

“Close behind him is Brownson, his  
 mouth very full  
 With attempting to gulp a Gregorian  
 bull;  
 Who contrives, spite of that, to pour out  
 as he goes  
 A stream of transparent and forcible  
 prose;  
 He shifts quite about, then proceeds to  
 expound  
 That 't is merely the earth, not himself,  
 that turns round,  
 And wishes it clearly impressed on your  
 mind  
 That the weathercock rules and not fol-  
 lows the wind;  
 Proving first, then as deftly confuting  
 each side,  
 With no doctrine pleased that's not  
 somewhere denied,  
 He lays the denier away on the  
 shelf,  
 And then—down beside him lies gravely  
 himself.  
 He's the Salt River boatman, who al-  
 ways stands willing  
 To convey friend or foe without charging  
 a shilling,  
 And so fond of the trip that, when lei-  
 sure's to spare,  
 He'll row himself up, if he can't get a  
 fare.  
 The worst of it is, that his logic's so  
 strong,  
 That of two sides he commonly chooses  
 the wrong;  
 If there is only one, why, he'll split it  
 in two,  
 And first pummel this half, then that,  
 black and blue.  
 That white's white needs no proof, but  
 it takes a deep fellow  
 To prove it jet-black, and that jet-black  
 is yellow.

He offers the true faith to drink in a sieve, —  
 When it reaches your lips there 's naught left to believe  
 But a few silly- (syllable, I mean,) -gisms that squat 'em  
 Like tadpoles, o'erjoyed with the mud at the bottom.

“There is Willis, all *natty* and jaunty and gay,  
 Who says his best things in so foppish a way,  
 With conceits and pet phrases so thickly o'erlaying 'em,  
 That one hardly knows whether to thank him for saying 'em;  
 Over-ornament ruins both poem and prose,  
 Just conceive of a Muse with a ring in her nose!  
 His prose had a natural grace of its own,  
 And enough of it, too, if he 'd let it alone;  
 But he twitches and jerks so, one fairly gets tired,  
 And is forced to forgive where one might have admired;  
 Yet whenever it slips away free and unlaced,  
 It runs like a stream with a musical waste,  
 And gurgles along with the liquidest sweep; —  
 'T is not deep as a river, but who 'd have it deep?  
 In a country where scarcely a village is found  
 That has not its author sublime and profound,  
 For some one to be slightly shallow 's a duty,  
 And Willis's shallowness makes half his beauty.  
 His prose winds along with a blithe, gurgling error,  
 And reflects all of Heaven it can see in its mirror:  
 'T is a narrowish strip, but it is not an artifice;  
 'T is the true out-of-doors with its genuine hearty phiz;  
 It is Nature herself, and there 's something in that,  
 Since most brains reflect but the crown of a hat.

Few volumes I know to read under a tree,  
 More truly delightful than his *A l'Abri*,  
 With the shadows of leaves flowing over your book,  
 Like ripple-shades netting the bed of a brook;  
 With June coming softly your shoulder to look over,  
 Breezes waiting to turn every leaf of your book over,  
 And Nature to criticise still as you read, —  
 The page that bears that is a rare one indeed.

“He 's so innate a cockney, that had he been born  
 Where plain bare-skin 's the only full-dress that is worn,  
 He 'd have given his own such an air that you 'd say  
 'T had been made by a tailor to lounge in Broadway.  
 His nature 's a glass of champagne with the foam on 't,  
 As tender as Fletcher, as witty as Beaumont;  
 So his best things are done in the flush of the moment;  
 If he wait, all is spoiled; he may stir it and shake it,  
 But, the fixed air once gone, he can never remake it.  
 He might be a marvel of easy delightfulness,  
 If he would not sometimes leave the *r* out of sprightfulness;  
 And he ought to let Scripture alone — 't is self-slaughter,  
 For nobody likes inspiration-and-water.  
 He 'd have been just the fellow to sup at the Mermaid,  
 Cracking jokes at rare Ben, with an eye to the barmaid,  
 His wit running up as Canary ran down, —  
 The topmost bright bubble on the wave of The Town.

“Here comes Parker, the Orson of parsons, a man  
 Whom the Church undertook to put under her ban  
 (The Church of Socinus, I mean), — his opinions  
 Being So- (ultra-) -cinian, they shocked the Socinians;



They believed — faith, I'm puzzled — I  
 think I may call  
 Their belief a believing in nothing at  
 all,  
 Or something of that sort ; I know they  
 all went  
 For a general union of total dissent :  
 He went a step farther ; without cough  
 or hem,  
 He frankly avowed he believed not in  
 them ;  
 And, before he could be jumbled up or  
 prevented,  
 From their orthodox kind of dissent he  
 dissented.  
 There was heresy here, you perceive, for  
 the right  
 Of privately judging means simply that  
 light  
 Has been granted to *me*, for deciding on  
*you* ;  
 And in happier times, before Atheism  
 grew,  
 The deed contained clauses for cooking  
 you too :  
 Now at Xerxes and Knut we all laugh,  
 yet our foot  
 With the same wave is wet that mocked  
 Xerxes and Knut,  
 And we all entertain a secure private  
 notion,  
 That our *Thus far!* will have a great  
 weight with the ocean.  
 'T was so with our liberal Christians :  
 they bore  
 With sincerest conviction their chairs to  
 the shore ;  
 They brandished their worn theological  
 birches,  
 Bade natural progress keep out of the  
 Churches,  
 And expected the lines they had drawn  
 to prevail  
 With the fast-rising tide to keep out of  
 their pale ;  
 They had formerly dammed the Pontifi-  
 cal See,  
 And the same thing, they thought,  
 would do nicely for P. ;  
 But he turned up his nose at their mum-  
 ming and shamming,  
 And cared (shall I say?) not a d—— for  
 their damming ;  
 So they first read him out of their  
 church, and next minute  
 Turned round and declared he had never  
 been in it.

But the ban was too small or the man  
 was too big,  
 For he recks not their bells, books, and  
 candles a fig  
 (He scarce looks like a man who would  
*stay* treated shabbily,  
 Sophroniscus' son's head o'er the fea-  
 tures of Rabelais) ; —  
 He bangs and bethwaeks them, — their  
 backs he salutes  
 With the whole tree of knowledge torn  
 up by the roots ;  
 His sermons with satire are plenteously  
 verjuiced,  
 And he talks in one breath of Confut-  
 zee, Cass, Zerduscht,  
 Jack Robinson, Peter the Hermit, Strap,  
 Dathan,  
 Cush, Pitt (not the bottomless, *that*  
 he's no faith in),  
 Pan, Pillicock, Shakespeare, Paul,  
 Toots, Monsieur Tonson,  
 Aldebaran, Alcander, Ben Khorat, Ben  
 Jonson,  
 Thoth, Richter, Joe Smith, Father Paul,  
 Judah Monis,  
 Musæus, Muretus, *hem*, —  $\mu$  Scorpio-  
 nis,  
 Maccabee, Maccaboy, Mac — Mac — ah !  
 Machiavelli,  
 Condorcet, Count d'Orsay, Conder, Say,  
 Ganganelli,  
 Orion, O'Connell, the Chevalier D'O,  
 (See the Memoirs of Sully,) *το παν*, the  
 great toe  
 Of the statue of Jupiter, now made to  
 pass  
 For that of Jew Peter by good Romish  
 brass,  
 (You may add for yourselves, for I find  
 it a bore,  
 All the names you have ever, or not,  
 heard before,  
 And when you've done that — why, in-  
 vent a few more.)  
 His hearers can't tell you on Sunday  
 beforehand,  
 If in that day's discourse they'll be  
 Babled or Koraned,  
 For he's seized the idea (by his mar-  
 tyrdom fired)  
 That all men (not orthodox) *may be*  
 inspired ;  
 Yet though wisdom profane with his  
 creed he may weave in,  
 He makes it quite clear what he *does n't*  
 believe in,

While some, who decry him, think all  
 Kingdom Come  
 Is a sort of a, kind of a, species of  
 Hum,  
 Of which, as it were, so to speak, not a  
 crumb  
 Would be left, if we did n't keep care-  
 fully mum,  
 And, to make a clean breast, that 't is  
 perfectly plain  
 That *all* kinds of wisdom are somewhat  
 profane;  
 Now P.'s creed than this may be lighter  
 or darker  
 But in one thing, 't is clear, he has  
 faith, namely — Parker;  
 And this is what makes him the crowd-  
 drawing preacher,  
 There 's a background of god to each  
 hard-working feature,  
 Every word that he speaks has been  
 fierily furnished  
 In the blast of a life that has struggled  
 in earnest:  
 There he stands, looking more like a  
 ploughman than priest,  
 If not dreadfully awkward, not graceful  
 at least,  
 His gestures all downright and same, if  
 you will,  
 As of brown-fisted Hobnail in hoeing a  
 drill,  
 But his periods fall on you, stroke after  
 stroke,  
 Like the blows of a lumberer felling an  
 oak,  
 You forget the man wholly, you 're  
 thankful to meet  
 With a preacher who smacks of the  
 field and the street,  
 And to hear, you 're not over-particular  
 whence,  
 Almost Taylor's profusion, quite Lati-  
 mer's sense.

“There is Bryant, as quiet, as cool,  
 and as dignified,  
 As a smooth, silent iceberg, that never  
 is ignified,  
 Save when by reflection 't is kindled o'  
 nights  
 With a semblance of flame by the chill  
 Northern Lights.  
 He may rank (Griswold says so) first  
 bard of your nation  
 (There 's no doubt that he stands in  
 supreme ice-olation),

Your topmost Parnassus he may set his  
 heel on,  
 But no warm applauses come, peal fol-  
 lowing peal on, —  
 He 's too smooth and too polished to  
 hang any zeal on:  
 Unqualified merits, I 'll grant, if you  
 choose, he has 'em,  
 But he lacks the one merit of kindling  
 enthusiasm;  
 If he stir you at all, it is just, on my  
 soul,  
 Like being stirred up with the very  
 North Pole.

“He is very nice reading in summer,  
 but *inter*  
 Nos, we don't want *extra* freezing in  
 winter;  
 Take him up in the depth of July, my  
 advice is,  
 When you feel an Egyptian devotion to  
 ices.  
 But, deduct all you can, there 's enough  
 that 's right good in him,  
 He has a true soul for field, river, and  
 wood in him;  
 And his heart, in the midst of brick  
 walls, or where'er it is,  
 Glows, softens, and thrills with the ten-  
 derest charities —  
 To you mortals that delve in this trade-  
 ridden planet?  
 No, to old Berkshire's hills, with their  
 limestone and granite.  
 If you 're one who *in loco* (add *foco*  
 here) *desipis*,  
 You will get of his outermost heart (as  
 I guess) a piece;  
 But you 'd get deeper down if you came  
 as a precipice,  
 And would break the last seal of its in-  
 wardest fountain,  
 If you only could palm yourself off for  
 a mountain.  
 Mr. Quivis, or somebody quite as dis-  
 cerning,  
 Some scholar who 's hourly expecting  
 his learning,  
 Calls B. the American Wordsworth;  
 but Wordsworth  
 May be rated at more than your whole  
 tuneful herd 's worth.  
 No, don't be absurd, he 's an excellent  
 Bryant;  
 But, my friends, you 'll endanger the  
 life of your client,

By attempting to stretch him up into a  
giant:  
If you choose to compare him, I think  
there are two per-  
-sons fit for a parallel—Thompson and  
Cowper; \*  
I don't mean exactly, — there 's some-  
thing of each,  
There 's T.'s love of nature, C.'s pen-  
chant to preach;  
Just mix up their minds so that C.'s  
spice of craziness  
Shall balance and neutralize T.'s turn  
for laziness,  
And it gives you a brain cool, quite  
frictionless, quiet,  
Whose internal police nips the buds of  
all riot, —  
A brain like a permanent strait-jacket  
put on  
The heart that strives vainly to burst  
off a button, —  
A brain which, without being slow or  
mechanic,  
Does more than a larger less drilled,  
more volcanic;  
He's a Cowper condensed, with no  
craziness bitten,  
And the advantage that Wordsworth  
before him had written.

“But, my dear little bardlings, don't  
prick up your ears  
Nor suppose I would rank you and Bry-  
ant as peers;  
If I call him an iceberg, I don't mean  
to say  
There is nothing in that which is grand  
in its way;  
He is almost the one of your poets that  
knows  
How much grace, strength, and dignity  
lie in Repose;  
If he sometimes fall short, he is too  
wise to mar  
His thought's modest fulness by going  
too far;  
'T would be well if your authors should  
all make a trial  
Of what virtue there is in severe self-  
denial,

\* To demonstrate quickly and easily how per-  
-versely absurd 'tis to sound this name  
*Cowper*,  
As people in general call him named *super*,  
I remark that he rhymes it himself with  
*horse-trooper*.

And measure their writings by Hesiod's  
staff,  
Which teaches that all has less value  
than half.

“There is Whittier, whose swelling  
and vehement heart  
Strains the strait-breasted drab of the  
Quaker apart,  
And reveals the live Man, still supreme  
and erect,  
Underneath the bemummifying wrappers  
of sect;  
There was ne'er a man born who had  
more of the swing  
Of the true lyric bard and all that kind  
of thing;  
And his failures arise (though he seem  
not to know it)  
From the very same cause that has  
made him a poet, —  
A fervor of mind which knows no sep-  
-aration  
'Twixt simple excitement and pure in-  
-spiration,  
As my Pythoness erst sometimes erred  
from not knowing  
If 't were I or mere wind through her  
tripod was blowing;  
Let his mind once get head in its fa-  
-vorite direction  
And the torrent of verse bursts the dams  
of reflection,  
While, borne with the rush of the metre  
along,  
The poet may chance to go right or go  
wrong,  
Content with the whirl and delirium of  
song;  
Then his grammar's not always correct,  
nor his rhymes,  
And he's prone to repeat his own lyrics  
sometimes,  
Not his best, though, for those are  
struck off at white-heats  
When the heart in his breast like a trip-  
-hammer beats,  
And can ne'er be repeated again any  
more  
Than they could have been carefully  
plotted before:  
Like old what's-his-name there at the  
battle of Hastings  
(Who, however, gave more than mere  
rhythmical bastings),  
Our Quaker leads off metaphorical  
fights



For reform and whatever they call human rights,  
 Both singing and striking in front of the war,  
 And hitting his foes with the mallet of Thor ;  
*Anne haec*, one exclaims, on beholding his knocks,  
*Vestis filii tui*, O leather-clad Fox ?  
 Can that be thy son, in the battle's mid din,  
 Preaching brotherly love and then driving it in  
 To the brain of the tough old Goliath of sin,  
 With the smoothest of pebbles from Castaly's spring  
 Impressed on his hard moral sense with a sling ?

“All honor and praise to the right-hearted bard  
 Who was true to The Voice when such service was hard,  
 Who himself was so free he dared sing for the slave  
 When to look but a protest in silence was brave ;  
 All honor and praise to the women and men  
 Who spoke out for the dumb and the down-trodden then !  
 It needs not to name them, already for each I see  
 History preparing the statue and niche ;  
 They were harsh, but shall *you* be so shocked at hard words  
 Who have beaten your pruning-hooks up into swords,  
 Whose rewards and hurrahs men are surer to gain  
 By the reaping of men and of women than grain ?  
 Why should *you* stand aghast at their fierce wordy war, if  
 You scalp one another for Bank or for Tariff ?  
 Your calling them cut-throats and knaves all day long  
 Doesn't prove that the use of hard language is wrong ;  
 While the World's heart beats quicker to think of such men  
 As signed Tyranny's doom with a bloody steel-pen,  
 While on Fourth-of-Julys beardless orators fright one

With hints at Harmodius and Aristogeiton,  
 You need not look shy at your sisters and brothers  
 Who stab with sharp words for the freedom of others ;—  
 No, a wreath, twine a wreath for the loyal and true  
 Who, for sake of the many, dared stand with the few,  
 Not of blood-spattered laurel for enemies braved,  
 But of broad, peaceful oak-leaves for citizens saved !

“Here comes Dana, abstractedly loitering along,  
 Involved in a paulo-post-future of song,  
 Who 'll be going to write what 'll never be written  
 Till the Muse, ere he think of it, gives him the mitten, —  
 Who is so well aware of how things should be done,  
 That his own works displease him before they're begun, —  
 Who so well all that makes up good poetry knows,  
 That the best of his poems is written in prose ;  
 All saddled and bridled stood Pegasus waiting,  
 He was booted and spurred, but he loitered debating ;  
 In a very grave question his soul was immersed, —  
 Which foot in the stirrup he ought to put first ;  
 And, while this point and that he judicially dwelt on,  
 He, somehow or other, had written Paul Felton,  
 Whose beauties or faults, whichever you see there,  
 You 'll allow only genius could hit upon either.  
 That he once was the Idle Man none will deplore,  
 But I fear he will never be anything more ;  
 The ocean of song heaves and glitters before him,  
 The depth and the vastness and longing sweep o'er him,  
 He knows every breaker and shoal on the chart,  
 He has the Coast Pilot and so on by heart.

Yet he spends his whole life, like the  
man in the fable,  
In learning to swim on his library-  
table.

“There swaggers John Neal, who has  
wasted in Maine  
The sinews and cords of his pugilist  
brain,  
Who might have been poet, but that,  
in its stead, he  
Preferred to believe that he was so  
already ;  
Too hasty to wait till Art's ripe fruit  
should drop,  
He must pelt down an unripe and  
colicky crop ;  
Who took to the law, and had this  
sterling plea for it,  
It required him to quarrel, and paid  
him a fee for it ;  
A man who's made less than he might  
have, because  
He always has thought himself more  
than he was, —  
Who, with very good natural gifts as a  
bard,  
Broke the strings of his lyre out by  
striking too hard,  
And cracked half the notes of a truly  
fine voice,  
Because song drew less instant attention  
than noise.  
Ah, men do not know how much strength  
is in poise,  
That he goes the farthest who goes far  
enough,  
And that all beyond that is just bother  
and stuff.  
No vain man matures, he makes too  
much new wood ;  
His blooms are too thick for the fruit  
to be good ;  
'T is the modest man ripens, 't is he  
that achieves,  
Just what's needed of sunshine and  
shade he receives ;  
Grapes, to mellow, require the cool dark  
of their leaves ;  
Neal wants balance ; he throws his mind  
always too far,  
Whisking out flocks of comets, but never  
a star ;  
He has so much muscle, and loves so to  
show it,  
That he strips himself naked to prove  
he's a poet,

And, to show he could leap Art's wide  
ditch, if he tried,  
Jumps clean o'er it, and into the hedge  
t' other side.

He has strength, but there's nothing  
about him in keeping ;  
One gets surelier onward by walking  
than leaping ;  
He has used his own sinews himself to  
distress,  
And had done vastly more had he done  
vastly less ;  
In letters, too soon is as bad as too late ;  
Could he only have waited he might  
have been great ;  
But he plumped into Helicon up to the  
waist,  
And muddied the stream ere he took his  
first taste.

“There is Hawthorne, with genius  
so shrinking and rare  
That you hardly at first see the strength  
that is there ;  
A frame so robust, with a nature so sweet,  
So earnest, so graceful, so lithe, and so  
fleet,  
Is worth a descent from Olympus to  
meet ;  
'T is as if a rough oak that for ages had  
stood,  
With his gnarled bony branches like  
ribs of the wood,  
Should bloom, after cycles of struggle  
and scathe,  
With a single anemone trembly and  
rathe ;  
His strength is so tender, his wildness  
so meek,  
That a suitable parallel sets one to  
seek, —  
He's a John Bunyan Fouqué, a Puritan  
Tieck ;  
When Nature was shaping him, clay was  
not granted  
For making so full-sized a man as she  
wanted,  
So, to fill out her model, a little she  
spared  
From some finer-grained stuff for a  
woman prepared,  
And she could not have hit a more ex-  
cellent plan  
For making him fully and perfectly  
man.  
The success of her scheme gave her so  
much delight,

That she tried it again, shortly after, in  
Dwight ;  
Only, while she was kneading and shap-  
ing the clay,  
She sang to her work in her sweet child-  
ish way,  
And found, when she'd put the last  
touch to his soul,  
That the music had somehow got mixed  
with the whole.

“Here's Cooper, who's written six  
volumes to show  
He's as good as a lord : well, let's  
grant that he's so ;  
If a person prefer that description of  
praise,  
Why, a coronet's certainly cheaper than  
bays ;  
But he need take no pains to convince  
us he's not  
(As his enemies say) the American Scott.  
Choose any twelve men, and let C. read  
aloud  
That one of his novels of which he's  
most proud,  
And I'd lay any bet that, without ever  
quitting  
Their box, they'd be all, to a man, for  
acquitting.  
He has drawn you one character, though,  
that is new,  
One wildflower he's plucked that is wet  
with the dew  
Of this fresh Western world, and, the  
thing not to mince,  
He has done naught but copy it ill ever  
since ;  
His Indians, with proper respect be it  
said,  
Are just Natty Bumpo, daubed over  
with red,  
And his very Long Toms are the same  
useful Nat,  
Rigged up in duck pants and a sou'-  
wester hat  
(Though once in a Coffin, a good chance  
was found  
To have slipped the old fellow away  
underground).  
All his other men-figures are clothes  
upon sticks,  
The *dernière chemise* of a man in a fix  
(As a captain besieged, when his garrison's  
small,  
Sets up caps upon poles to be seen o'er  
the wall) ;

And the women he draws from one  
model don't vary,  
All sappy as maples and flat as a prai-  
rie.  
When a character's wanted, he goes to  
the task  
As a cooper would do in composing a  
cask ;  
He picks out the staves, of their quali-  
ties heedful,  
Just hoops them together as tight as is  
needful,  
And, if the best fortune should crown  
the attempt, he  
Has made at the most something  
wooden and empy.

“Don't suppose I would underrate  
Cooper's abilities ;  
If I thought you'd do that, I should  
feel very ill at ease ;  
The men who have given to *one* charac-  
ter life  
And objective existence are not very  
rife ;  
You may number them all, both prose-  
writers and singers,  
Without overrunning the bounds of  
your fingers,  
And Natty won't go to oblivion quicker  
Than Adams the parson or Primrose the  
vicar.

“There is one thing in Cooper I like,  
too, and that is  
That on manners he lectures his coun-  
trymen gratis ;  
Not precisely so either, because, for a  
rarity,  
He is paid for his tickets in unpopu-  
larity.  
Now he may overcharge his American  
pictures,  
But you'll grant there's a good deal of  
truth in his strictures ;  
And I honor the man who is willing to  
sink  
Half his present repute for the freedom  
to think,  
And, when he has thought, be his cause  
strong or weak,  
Will risk t' other half for the freedom to  
speak,  
Caring naught for what vengeance the  
mob has in store,  
Let that mob be the upper ten thousand  
or lower.



"There are truths you Americans  
 need to be told,  
 And it never'll refute them to swagger  
 and scold;  
 John Bull, looking o'er the Atlantic, in  
 cholera  
 At your aptness for trade, says you wor-  
 ship the dollar;  
 But to scorn such eye-dollar-try's what  
 very few do,  
 And John goes to that church as often  
 as you do.  
 No matter what John says, don't try to  
 outcrow him,  
 'T is enough to go quietly on and out-  
 grow him,  
 Like most fathers, Bull hates to see  
 Number One  
 Displacing himself in the mind of his  
 son,  
 And detests the same faults in himself  
 he'd neglected  
 When he sees them again in his child's  
 glass reflected;  
 To love one another you're too like by  
 half;  
 If he is a bull, you're a pretty stout calf,  
 And tear your own pasture for naught  
 but to show  
 What a nice pair of horns you're begin-  
 ning to grow.

"There are one or two things I should  
 just like to hint,  
 For you don't often get the truth told  
 you in print;  
 The most of you (this is what strikes all  
 beholders)  
 Have a mental and physical stoop in the  
 shoulders;  
 Though you ought to be free as the  
 winds and the waves,  
 You've the gait and the manners of  
 runaway slaves;  
 Though you brag of your New World,  
 you don't half believe in it;  
 And as much of the Old as is possible  
 weave in it;  
 Your goddess of freedom, a tight, buxom  
 girl,  
 With lips like a cherry and teeth like a  
 pearl,  
 With eyes bold as Herë's, and hair float-  
 ing free,  
 And full of the sun as the spray of the  
 sea,  
 Who can sing at a husking or romp at a  
 shearing,

Who can trip through the forests alone  
 without fearing,  
 Who can drive home the cows with a  
 song through the grass,  
 Keeps glancing aside into Europe's  
 cracked glass,  
 Hides her red hands in gloves, pinches  
 up her lithe waist,  
 And makes herself wretched with trans-  
 marine taste;  
 She loses her fresh country charm when  
 she takes  
 Any mirror except her own rivers and  
 lakes.

"You steal Englishmen's books and  
 think Englishmen's thought,  
 With their salt on her tail your wild  
 eagle is caught;  
 Your literature suits its each whisper  
 and motion  
 To what will be thought of it over the  
 ocean;  
 The cast clothes of Europe your states-  
 manship tries  
 And mumbles again the old blarneys and  
 lies;—  
 Forget Europe wholly, your veins throb  
 with blood,  
 To which the dull current in hers is but  
 mud;  
 Let her sneer, let her say your experi-  
 ment fails,  
 In her voice there's a tremble e'en now  
 while she rails,  
 And your shore will soon be in the na-  
 ture of things  
 Covered thick with gilt drift-wood of  
 castaway kings,  
 Where alone, as it were in a Longfellow's  
 Waif,  
 Her fugitive pieces will find themselves  
 safe.  
 O my friends, thank your god, if you  
 have one, that he  
 'Twixt the Old World and you set the  
 gulf of a sea;  
 Be strong-backed, brown-handed, up-  
 right as your pines,  
 By the scale of a hemisphere shape your  
 designs,  
 Be true to yourselves and this new nine-  
 teenth age,  
 As a statue by Powers, or a picture by  
 Page,  
 Plough, sail, forge, build, carve, paint,  
 make all over new,

To your own New-World instincts con-  
trive to be true,  
Keep your ears open wide to the Future's  
first call,  
Be whatever you will, but yourselves  
first of all,  
Stand fronting the dawn on Toil's  
heaven-scaling peaks,  
And become my new race of more prac-  
tical Greeks.  
Hem! your likeness at present, I shud-  
der to tell o't,  
Is that you have your slaves, and the  
Greek had his helot."

Here a gentleman present, who had  
in his attic  
More pepper than brains, shrieked, "The  
man 's a fanatic,  
I'm a capital tailor with warm tar and  
feathers,  
And will make him a suit that'll serve  
in all weathers;  
But we'll argue the point first, I'm  
willing to reason 't,  
Palaver before condemnation 's but de-  
cent;  
So, through my humble person, Hu-  
manity begs  
Of the friends of true freedom a loan of  
bad eggs."  
But Apollo let one such a look of his  
show forth  
As when *ἦν νύκτι εὐκώς*, and so forth,  
And the gentleman somehow slunk out  
of the way,  
But, as he was going, gained courage to  
say, —  
"At slavery in the abstract my whole  
soul rebels,  
I am as strongly opposed to 't as any one  
else."  
"Ay, no doubt, but whenever I've hap-  
pened to meet  
With a wrong or a crime, it is always  
concrete,"  
Answered Phœbus severely; then turn-  
ing to us,  
"The mistake of such fellows as just  
made the fuss  
Is only in taking a great busy nation  
For a part of their pitiful cotton-plan-  
tation. —  
But there comes Miranda, Zeus! where  
shall I flee to?  
She has such a penchant for bothering  
me too!

She always keeps asking if I don't ob-  
serve a  
Particular likeness 'twixt her and Mi-  
nerva;  
She tells me my efforts in verse are quite  
clever;—  
She's been travelling now, and will be  
worse than ever;  
One would think, though, a sharp-  
sighted noter she'd be  
Of all that 's worth mentioning over the  
sea,  
For a woman must surely see well, if  
she try,  
The whole of whose being's a cap-  
ital I:  
She will take an old notion, and make  
it her own,  
By saying it o'er in her Sibylline  
tone,  
Or persuade you 't is something tremen-  
dously deep,  
By repeating it so as to put you to  
sleep;  
And she well may defy any mortal to  
see through it,  
When once she has mixed up her in-  
finite *me* through it.  
There is one thing she owns in her own  
single right,  
It is native and genuine—namely, her  
spite;  
Though, when acting as censor, she  
privately blows  
A censor of vanity 'neath her own  
nose."

Here Miranda came up, and said,  
"Phœbus! you know  
That the infinite Soul has its infinite woe,  
As I ought to know, having lived cheek  
by jowl,  
Since the day I was born, with the In-  
finite Soul;  
I myself introduced, I myself, I alone,  
To my Land's better life authors solely  
my own,  
Who the sad heart of earth on their  
shoulders have taken,  
Whose works sound a depth by Life's  
quiet unshaken,  
Such as Shakespeare, for instance, the  
Bible, and Bacon,  
Not to mention my own works; Time's  
nadir is fleet,  
And, as for myself, I'm quite out of  
conceit—"

"Quite out of conceit! I'm enchanted to hear it,"  
 Eried Apollo aside. "Who'd have thought she was near it?  
 To be sure, one is apt to exhaust those commodities  
 One uses too fast, yet in this case as odd it is  
 As if Neptune should say to his turbot and whittings,  
 'I'm as much out of salt as Miranda's own writings'  
 (Which, as she in her own happy manner has said,  
 Sound a depth, for 't is one of the functions of lead).  
 She often has asked me if I could not find  
 A place somewhere near me that suited her mind;  
 I know but a single one vacant, which she  
 With her rare talent that way, would fit to a T.  
 And it would not imply any pause or cessation  
 In the work she esteems her peculiar vocation, —  
 She may enter on duty to-day, if she chooses,  
 And remain Tiring-woman for life to the Muses."

Miranda meanwhile has succeeded in driving  
 Up into a corner, in spite of their striving,  
 A small flock of terrified victims, and there,  
 With an I-turn-the-crank-of-the- Universe air  
 And a tone which, at least to *my* fancy, appears  
 Not so much to be entering as boxing your ears,  
 Is unfolding a tale (of herself, I surmise,  
 For 't is dotted as thick as a peacock's with l's).  
*Apropos* of Miranda, I'll rest on my oars  
 And drift through a trifling digression on bores,  
 For, though not wearing ear-rings *in more majorum*,  
 Our ears are kept bored just as if we still wore 'em.

There was one feudal custom worth keeping, at least,  
 Roasted bores made a part of each well-ordered feast,  
 And of all quiet pleasures the very *no plus*  
 Was in hunting wild bores as the tame ones hunt us.  
 Archæologists, I know, who have personal fears  
 Of this wise application of hounds and of spears,  
 Have tried to make out, with a zeal more than wanted,  
 'T was a kind of wild swine that our ancestors hunted;  
 But I'll never believe that the age which has strewn  
 Europe o'er with cathedrals, and otherwise shown  
 That it knew what was what, could by chance not have known  
 (Spending, too, its chief time with its buff on, no doubt),  
 Which beast 't would improve the world most to thin out.  
 I divide bores myself, in the manner of rifles,  
 Into two great divisions, regardless of trifles; —  
 There's your smooth-bore and screw-bore, who do not much vary  
 In the weight of cold lead they respectively carry.  
 The smooth-bore is one in whose essence the mind  
 Not a corner nor cranny to cling by can find;  
 You feel as in nightmares sometimes, when you slip  
 Down a steep slated roof, where there's nothing to grip;  
 You slide and you slide, the blank horror increases, —  
 You had rather by far be at once smashed to pieces;  
 You fancy a whirlpool below white and frothing,  
 And finally drop off and light upon — nothing.  
 The screw-bore has twists in him, faint predilections  
 For going just wrong in the tritest directions;  
 When he's wrong he is flat, when he's right he can't show it,



He'll tell you what Snooks said about  
the new poet,\*  
Or how Fogrum was outraged by Ten-  
nyson's Princess;  
He has spent all his spare time and in-  
tellect since his  
Birth in perusing, on each art and  
science,  
Just the books in which no one puts any  
reliance,  
And though *nemo*, we're told, *horis*  
*omnibus sapit*,  
The rule will not fit him, however you  
shape it,  
For he has a perennial foison of sappi-  
ness;  
He has just enough force to spoil half  
your day's happiness,  
And to make him a sort of mosquito to  
be with,  
But just not enough to dispute or agree  
with.

These sketches I made (not to be too  
explicit)  
From two honest fellows who made me  
a visit,  
And broke, like the tale of the Bear and  
the Fiddle,  
My reflections on Halleck short off by  
the middle;  
I sha' n't now go into the subject more  
deeply,  
For I notice that some of my readers look  
sleep'y;  
I will barely remark that, 'mongst civil-  
ized nations,  
There's none that displays more exem-  
plary patience  
Under all sorts of boring, at all sorts of  
hours,  
From all sorts of desperate persons, than  
ours.  
Not to speak of our papers, our State  
legislatures,  
And other such trials for sensitive na-  
tures,  
Just look for a moment at Congress,—  
appalled,  
My fancy shrinks back from the phan-  
tom it called;  
Why, there's scarcely a member un-  
worthy to frown

\* (If you call Snooks an owl, he will show by  
his looks  
That he's morally certain you're jealous of  
Snooks.)

'Neath what Fourier nicknames the  
Boreal crown;  
Only think what that infinite bore-  
pow'r could do  
If applied with a utilitarian view;  
Suppose, for example, we shipped it  
with care  
To Sahara's great desert and let it bore  
there;  
If they held one short session and did  
nothing else,  
They'd fill the whole waste with Arte-  
sian wells.  
But 't is time now with pen phono-  
graphic to follow  
Through some more of his sketches our  
laughing Apollo:—

“There comes Harry Franco, and, as  
he draws near,  
You find that 's a smile which you took  
for a sneer;  
One half of him contradicts t' other;  
his wont  
Is to say very sharp things and do very  
blunt;  
His manner 's as hard as his feelings are  
tender,  
And a *sortie* he'll make when he means  
to surrender;  
He's in joke half the time when he  
seems to be sternest,  
When he seems to be joking, be sure  
he's in earnest;  
He has common sense in a way that's  
uncommon,  
Hates humbug and cant, loves his  
friends like a woman,  
Builds his dislikes of cards and his  
friendships of oak,  
Loves a prejudice better than aught but  
a joke,  
Is half upright Quaker, half downright  
Come-outer,  
Loves Freedom too well to go stark mad  
about her,  
Quite artless himself, is a lover of Art,  
Shuts you out of his secrets and into his  
heart,  
And though not a poet, yet all must  
admire  
In his letters of Pinto his skill on the liar.

“There comes Poe, with his raven,  
like Barnaby Rudge,  
Three fifths of him genius and two  
fifths sheer fudge,

Who talks like a book of iambs and  
 pentameters,  
 In a way to make people of common  
 sense damn metres,  
 Who has written some things quite the  
 best of their kind,  
 But the heart somehow seems all  
 squeezed out by the mind,  
 Who — But hey-day! What's this?  
 Messieurs Mathews and Poe,  
 You must n't fling mud-balls at Long-  
 fellow so,  
 Does it make a man worse that his char-  
 acter's such  
 As to make his friends love him (as you  
 think) too much?  
 Why, there is not a bard at this mo-  
 ment alive  
 More willing than he that his fellows  
 should thrive;  
 While you are abusing him thus, even  
 now  
 He would help either one of you out of  
 a slough;  
 You may say that he's smooth and all  
 that till you're hoarse,  
 But remember that elegance also is force;  
 After polishing granite as much as you  
 will,  
 The heart keeps its tough old persist-  
 ency still;  
 Deduct all you can, *that* still keeps you  
 at bay;  
 Why, he'll live till men weary of  
 Collins and Gray.  
 I'm not over-fond of Greek metres in  
 English,  
 To me rhyme's a gain, so it be not too  
 jinglish,  
 And your modern hexameter verses are  
 no more  
 Like Greek ones than sleek Mr. Pope is  
 like Homer;  
 As the roar of the sea to the coo of a  
 pigeon is,  
 So, compared to your moderns, sounds  
 old Melesigenes;  
 I may be too partial, the reason, per-  
 haps, o't is  
 That I've heard the old blind man re-  
 cite his own rhapsodies,  
 And my ear with that music impreg-  
 nate may be,  
 Like the poor exiled shell with the soul  
 of the sea,  
 Or as one can't bear Strauss when his  
 nature is cloven

To its deeps within deeps by the stroke  
 of Beethoven;  
 But, set that aside, and 't is truth that  
 I speak,  
 Had Theocritus written in English, not  
 Greek,  
 I believe that his exquisite sense would  
 scarce change a line  
 In that rare, tender, virgin-like pastoral  
 Evangeline.  
 That's not ancient nor modern, its  
 place is apart  
 Where time has no sway, in the realm  
 of pure Art,  
 'T is a shrine of retreat from Earth's  
 hubbub and strife  
 As quiet and chaste as the author's own  
 life.

"There comes Philothea, her face all  
 aglow,  
 She has just been dividing some poor  
 creature's woe,  
 And can't tell which pleases her most,  
 to relieve  
 His want, or his story to hear and be-  
 lieve;  
 No doubt against many deep griefs she  
 prevails,  
 For her ear is the refuge of destitute  
 tales;  
 She knows well that silence is sorrow's  
 best food,  
 And that talking draws off from the  
 heart its black blood,  
 So she'll listen with patience and let  
 you unfold  
 Your bundle of rags as 't were pure cloth  
 of gold,  
 Which, indeed, it all turns to as soon  
 as she's touched it,  
 And (to borrow a phrase from the nur-  
 sery) *muched* it;  
 She has such a musical taste, she will  
 go  
 Any distance to hear one who draws a  
 long bow;  
 She will swallow a wonder by mere  
 might and main,  
 And thinks it Geometry's fault if she's  
 fain  
 To consider things flat, inasmuch as  
 they're plain;  
 Facts with her are accomplished, as  
 Frenchmen would say —  
 They will prove all she wishes them to  
 either way, —

And, as fact lies on this side or that, we  
 must try,  
 If we're seeking the truth, to find  
 where it don't lie;  
 I was telling her once of a marvellous  
 aloe  
 That for thousands of years had looked  
 spindling and sallow,  
 And, though nursed by the fruitfulest  
 powers of mud,  
 Had never vouchsafed e'en so much as a  
 bud,  
 Till its owner remarked (as a sailor, you  
 know,  
 Often will in a calm) that it never would  
 blow,  
 For he wished to exhibit the plant, and  
 designed  
 That its blowing should help him in  
 raising the wind;  
 At last it was told him that if he should  
 water  
 Its roots with the blood of his unmar-  
 ried daughter  
 (Who was born, as her mother, a Cal-  
 vinist, said,  
 With William Law's serious caul on  
 her head),  
 It would blow as the obstinate breeze  
 did when by a  
 Like decree of her father died Iphigenia;  
 At first he declared he himself would be  
 blowed  
 Ere his conscience with such a foul  
 crime he would load,  
 But the thought, coming oft, grew less  
 dark than before,  
 And he mused, as each creditor knocked  
 at his door,  
 If *this* were but done they would dun  
 me no more;  
 I told Philothea his struggles and  
 doubts,  
 And how he considered the ins and the  
 outs  
 Of the visions he had, and the dreadful  
 dyspepsy,  
 How he went to the seër that lives at  
 Po'keepsie,  
 How the seër advised him to sleep on it  
 first,  
 And to read his big volume in case of  
 the worst,  
 And further advised he should pay him  
 five dollars  
 For writing *Hum, Hum*, on his wrist-  
 bands and collars;

Three years and ten days these dark  
 words he had studied  
 When the daughter was missed, and the  
 aloe had budded;  
 I told how he watched it grow large and  
 more large,  
 And wondered how much for the show  
 he should charge, —  
 She had listened with utter indifference  
 to this, till  
 I told how it bloomed, and, discharging  
 its pistil  
 With an aim the Eumenides dictated,  
 shot  
 The botanical filicide dead on the spot;  
 It had blown, but he reaped not his  
 horrible gains,  
 For it blew with such force as to blow  
 out his brains,  
 And the crime was blown also, because  
 on the wad,  
 Which was paper, was writ 'Visitation  
 of God,  
 As well as a thrilling account of the deed  
 Which the coroner kindly allowed me to  
 read.

"Well, my friend took this story up  
 just, to be sure,  
 As one might a poor foundling that's  
 laid at one's door;  
 She combed it and washed it and clothed  
 it and fed it,  
 And as if 't were her own child most  
 tenderly bred it,  
 Laid the scene (of the legend, I mean)  
 far away a-  
 -mong the green vales underneath Hima-  
 laya,  
 And by artist-like touches, laid on here  
 and there,  
 Made the whole thing so touching, I  
 frankly declare  
 I have read it all thrice, and, perhaps I  
 am weak,  
 But I found every time there were tears  
 on my cheek.

"The pole, science tells us, the mag-  
 net controls,  
 But she is a magnet to emigrant Poles,  
 And folks with a mission that nobody  
 knows,  
 Throng thickly about her as bees round  
 a rose;  
 She can fill up the *carets* in such, make  
 their scope



Converge to some focus of rational hope,  
 And, with sympathies fresh as the morn-  
 ing, their gall  
 Can transmute into honey,— but this is  
 not all ;  
 Not only for those she has solace, O, say,  
 Vice's desperate nursling adrift in Broad-  
 way,  
 Who clingest, with all that is left of thee  
 human,  
 To the last slender spar from the wreck  
 of the woman,  
 Hast thou not found one shore where  
 those tired drooping feet  
 Could reach firm mother-earth, one full  
 heart on whose beat  
 The soothed head in silence reposing  
 could hear  
 The chimes of far childhood throb back  
 on the ear?  
 Ah, there's many a beam from the foun-  
 tain of day  
 That, to reach us unclouded, must pass,  
 on its way,  
 Through the soul of a woman, and hers  
 is wide ope  
 To the influence of Heaven as the blue  
 eyes of Hope ;  
 Yes, a great heart is hers, one that dares  
 to go in  
 To the prison, the slave-hut, the alleys  
 of sin,  
 And to bring into each, or to find there,  
 some line  
 Of the never completely out-trampled  
 divine ;  
 If her heart at high floods swamps her  
 brain now and then,  
 'T is but richer for that when the tide  
 ebbs agen,  
 As, after old Nile has subsided, his  
 plain  
 Overflows with a second broad deluge of  
 grain ;  
 What a wealth would it bring to the  
 narrow and sour  
 Could they be as a Child but for one lit-  
 tle hour !

“What! Irving? thrice welcome,  
 warm heart and fine brain,  
 You bring back the happiest spirit from  
 Spain,  
 And the gravest sweet humor, that ever  
 were there  
 Since Cervantes met death in his gentle  
 despair ;

Nay, don't be embarrassed, nor look so  
 beseeching, —  
 I sha' n't run directly against my own  
 preaching,  
 And, having just laughed at their Raph-  
 aels and Dantes,  
 Go to setting you up beside matchless  
 Cervantes ;  
 But allow me to speak what I honestly  
 feel, —  
 To a true poet-heart add the fun of Dick  
 Steele,  
 Throw in all of Addison, *minus* the  
 chill,  
 With the whole of that partnership's  
 stock and good-will,  
 Mix well, and while stirring, hum o'er,  
 as a spell,  
 The fine *old* English Gentleman, sim-  
 mer it well,  
 Sweeten just to your own private liking,  
 then strain,  
 That only the finest and clearest remain,  
 Let it stand out of doors till a soul it  
 receives  
 From the warm lazy sun loitering down  
 through green leaves,  
 And you'll find a choice nature, not  
 wholly deserving  
 A name either English or Yankee, —  
 just Irving.

“There goes, — but *stet nominis um-  
 bra*, — his name  
 You'll be glad enough, some day or  
 other, to claim,  
 And will all crowd about him and swear  
 that you knew him  
 If some English critic should chance to  
 review him.  
 The old *porcos ante ne projiciatis*  
 MARGARITAS, for him you have verified  
 gratis ;  
 What matters his name? Why, it may  
 be Sylvester,  
 Judd, Junior, or Junius, Ulysses, or  
 Nestor,  
 For aught I know or care ; 't is enough  
 that I look  
 On the author of 'Margaret,' the first  
 Yankee book  
 With the *soul* of Down East in 't, and  
 things farther East,  
 As far as the threshold of morning, at  
 least,  
 Where awaits the fair dawn of the sim-  
 ple and true,

Of the day that comes slowly to make  
all things new.

"T has a smack of pine woods, of bare  
field and bleak hill,

Such as only the breed of the Mayflower  
could till ;

The Puritan's shown in it, tough to the  
core,

Such as prayed, smiting Agag on red  
Marston Moor :

With an unwilling humor, half choked  
by the drouth

In brown hollows about the inhospitable  
mouth ;

With a soul full of poetry, though it has  
qualms

About finding a happiness out of the  
Psalms ;

Full of tenderness, too, though it shrinks  
in the dark,

Hamadryad-like, under the coarse, shaggy  
bark ;

That sees visions, knows wrestlings of  
God with the Will,

And has its own Sinais and thunderings  
still."

Here, — "Forgive me, Apollo, I  
cried, "while I pour

My heart out to my birthplace: O loved  
more and more

Dear Baystate, from whose rocky bosom  
thy sons

Should suck milk, strong-will-giving,  
brave, such as runs

In the veins of old Graylock — who is it  
that dares

Call thee pedler, a soul wrapped in bank-  
books and shares ?

It is false ! She's a Poet ! I see, as I  
write,

Along the far railroad the steam-snake  
glide white,

The cataract-throb of her mill-hearts I  
hear,

The swift strokes of trip-hammers weary  
my ear,

Sledges ring upon anvils, through logs  
the saw screams,

Blocks swing to their place, beetles  
drive home the beams : - -

It is songs such as these that she croons  
to the din

Of her fast-flying shuttles, year out and  
year in,

While from earth's farthest corner there  
comes not a breeze

But wafts her the buzz of her gold-  
gleaning bees :

What though those horn hands have as  
yet found small time

For painting and sculpture and music  
and rhyme ?

These will come in due order ; the need  
that pressed sorest

Was to vanquish the seasons, the ocean,  
the forest,

To bridle and harness the rivers, the  
steam,

Making that whirl her mill-wheels, this  
tug in her team,

To vassalize old tyrant Winter, and make  
Him delve surlily for her on river and  
lake ;—

When this New World was parted, she  
strove not to shirk

Her lot in the heirdom, the tough, si-  
lent Work,

The hero-share ever, from Herakles down  
To Odin, the Earth's iron sceptre and  
crown :

Yes, thou dear, noble Mother ! if ever  
men's praise

Could be claimed for creating heroical  
lays,

Thou hast won it ; if ever the laurel di-  
vine

Crowned the Maker and Builder, that  
glory is thine !

Thy songs are right epic, they tell how  
this rude

Rock-rib of our earth here was tamed and  
subdued ;

Thou hast written them plain on the  
face of the planet

In brave, deathless letters of iron and  
granite ;

Thou hast printed them deep for all  
time ; they are set

From the same runic type-fount and  
alphabet

With thy stout Berkshire hills and the  
arms of thy Bay, —

They are staves from the burly old May-  
flower lay.

If the drones of the Old World, in queru-  
lous ease,

Ask thy Art and thy Letters, point  
proudly to these,

Or, if they deny these are Letters and Art,  
Toil on with the same old invincible  
heart ;

Thou art rearing the pedestal broad-  
based and grand

Whereon the fair shapes of the Artist  
shall stand,  
And creating, through labors undaunted  
and long,  
The theme for all Sculpture and Paint-  
ing and Song!

“But my good mother Baystate wants  
no praise of mine,  
She learned from *her* mother a precept  
divine

About something that butters no pars-  
nips, her *forte*

In another direction lies, work is her sport  
(Though she'll courtesay and set her cap  
straight, that she will,

If you talk about Plymouth and red  
Bunker's hill).

Dear, notable goodwife! by this time of  
night,

Her hearth is swept neatly, her fire  
burning bright,

And she sits in a chair (of home plan and  
make) rocking,

Musing much, all the while, as she darns  
on a stocking,

Whether turkeys will come pretty high  
next Thanksgiving,

Whether flour'll be so dear, for, as sure  
as she's living,

She will use rye-and-injun then, whether  
the pig

By this time ain't got pretty tolerable big,  
And whether to sell it outright will be best,

Or to smoke hams and shoulders and  
salt down the rest, —

At this minute, she'd swop all my verses,  
ah, cruel!

For the last patent stove that is saving  
of fuel;

So I'll just let Apollo go on, for his phiz  
Shows I've kept him awaiting too long  
as it is.”

“If our friend, there, who seems a  
reporter, is done

With his burst of emotion, why, *I* will  
go on,”

Said Apollo; some smiled, and, indeed,  
I must own

There was something sarcastic, perhaps,  
in his tone; —

“There's Holmes, who is matchless  
among you for wit;

A Leyden-jar always full-charged, from  
which flit

The electrical tingles of hit after  
hit;

In long poems 't is painful sometimes,  
and invites

A thought of the way the new Telegraph  
writes,

Which pricks down its little sharp sen-  
tences spitefully

As if you got more than you'd title to  
rightfully,

And you find yourself hoping its wild  
father Lightning

Would flame in for a second and give  
you a fright'ning.

He has perfect sway of what *I* call a  
sham metre,

But many admire it, the English pen-  
tameter,

And Campbell, I think, wrote most com-  
monly worse,

With less nerve, swing, and fire in the  
same kind of verse,

Nor e'er achieved aught in 't so worthy  
of praise

As the tribute of Holmes to the grand  
*Marseillaise*.

You went crazy last year over Bulwer's  
New Timon; —

Why, if B., to the day of his dying,  
should rhyme on,

Heaping verses on verses and tomes  
upon tomes,

He could ne'er reach the best point and  
vigor of Holmes.

His are just the fine hands, too, to  
weave you a lyric

Full of fancy, fun, feeling, or spiced  
with satyric

In a measure so kindly, you doubt if  
the toes

That are trodden upon are your own or  
your foes'.

“There is Lowell, who's striving  
Parnassus to climb

With a whole bale of *isms* tied together  
with rhyme,

He might get on alone, spite of bram-  
bles and boulders,

But he can't with that bundle he has on  
his shoulders,

The top of the hill he will ne'er come  
nigh reaching

Till he learns the distinction 'twixt  
singing and preaching;

His lyre has some chords that would  
ring pretty well,



But he'd rather by half make a drum  
of the shell,  
And rattle away till he's old as Me-  
thusalem,  
At the head of a march to the last new  
Jerusalem.

“There goes Halleck, whose Fanny's  
a pseudo Don Juan,  
With the wickedness out that gave salt  
to the true one,  
He's a wit, though, I hear, of the very  
first order,  
And once made a pun on the words soft  
Recorder ;  
More than this, he's a very great poet,  
I'm told,  
And has had his works published in  
crimson and gold,  
With something they call 'Illustra-  
tions,' to wit,  
Like those with which Chapman ob-  
scured Holy Writ,\*  
Which are said to illustrate, because, as  
I view it,  
Like *lucus a non*, they precisely don't do  
it ;  
Let a man who can write what himself  
understands  
Keep clear, if he can, of designing men's  
hands,  
Who bury the sense, if there's any  
worth having,  
And then very honestly call it engrav-  
ing.  
But, to quit *badinage*, which there is n't  
much wit in,  
Halleck's better, I doubt not, than all  
he has written ;  
In his verse a clear glimpse you will  
frequently find,  
If not of a great, of a fortunate mind,  
Which contrives to be true to its natural  
loves  
In a world of back-offices, ledgers, and  
stoves.  
When his heart breaks away from the  
brokers and banks,  
And kneels in his own private shrine to  
give thanks,  
There's a genial manliness in him that  
earns  
Our sincerest respect (read, for instance,  
his 'Burns'),

\* (Cuts rightly called wooden, as all must  
admit.)

And we can't but regret (seek excuse  
where we may)  
That so much of a man has been ped-  
dled away.

“But what's that? a mass-meeting?  
No, there come in lots,  
The American Bulwers, Disraelis, and  
Scotts,  
And in short the American everyting-  
elses,  
Each charging the others with envies and  
jealousies ;—  
By the way, 'tis a fact that displays  
what profusions  
Of all kinds of greatness bless free insti-  
tutions,  
That while the Old World has produced  
barely eight  
Of such poets as all men agree to call  
great,  
And of other great characters hardly a  
score  
(One might safely say less than that  
rather than more),  
With you every year a whole crop is  
begotten,  
They're as much of a staple as corn is,  
or cotton ;  
Why, there's scarcely a huddle of log-  
huts and shanties  
That has not brought forth its own Mil-  
tons and Dantes ;  
I myself know ten Byrons, one Cole-  
ridge, three Shelleys,  
Two Raphaels, six Titians, (I think) one  
Apelles,  
Leonardos and Rubenses plenty as  
lichens,  
One (but that one is plenty) American  
Dickens,  
A whole flock of Lambs, any number of  
Tennysons, —  
In short, if a man has the luck to have  
any sons,  
He may feel pretty certain that one out  
of twain  
Will besome very great person over again.  
There is one inconvenience in all this,  
which lies  
In the fact that by contrast we estimate  
size,\*

\* That is in most cases we do, but not all.  
Past a doubt, there are men who are innately  
small,  
Such as Blank, who, without being 'minished  
a tittle.  
Might stand for a type of the Absolute Little.

And, where there are none except Titans, great stature  
 Is only the normal proceeding of nature.  
 What puff the strained sails of your praise will you furl at, if  
 The calmest degree that you know is superlative ?  
 At Rome, all whom Charon took into his wherry must,  
 As a matter of course, be well *issimust* and *errimust*,  
 A Greek, too, could feel, while in that famous boat he tost,  
 That his friends would take care he was *ιστοσ* and *ωρασ*,  
 And formerly we, as through graveyards we past,  
 Thought the world went from bad to worst fearfully fast ;  
 Let us glance for a moment, 't is well worth the pains,  
 And note what an average graveyard contains ;  
 There lie levellers levelled, duns done up themselves,  
 There are booksellers finally laid on their shelves,  
 Horizontally there lie upright politicians,  
 Dose-a-dose with their patients sleep faultless physicians,  
 There are slave-drivers quietly whipped underground,  
 There bookbinders, done up in boards, are fast bound,  
 There card-players wait till the last trump be played,  
 There all the choice spirits get finally laid,  
 There the babe that 's unborn is supplied with a berth,  
 There men without legs get their six feet of earth,  
 There lawyers repose, each wrapped up in his case,  
 There seekers of office are sure of a place,  
 There defendant and plaintiff get equally cast,  
 There shoemakers quietly stick to the last,  
 There brokers at length become silent as stocks,  
 There stage-drivers sleep without quitting their box,  
 And so forth and so forth and so forth and so on,

With this kind of stuff one might endlessly go on ;  
 To come to the point, I may safely assert you  
 Will find in each yard every cardinal virtue ;\*  
 Each has six truest patriots : four discoverers of ether,  
 Who never had thought on 't nor mentioned it either ;  
 Ten poets, the greatest who ever wrote rhyme :  
 Two hundred and forty first men of their time :  
 One person whose portrait just gave the least hint  
 Its original had a most horrible squint :  
 One critic, most (what do they call it ?) reflective,  
 Who never had used the phrase ob- or subjective :  
 Forty fathers of Freedom, of whom twenty bred  
 Their sons for the rice-swamps, at so much a head,  
 And their daughters for— faugh ! thirty mothers of Gracchi :  
 Non-resistants who gave many a spiritual black-eye :  
 Eight true friends of their kind, one of whom was a jailer :  
 Four captains almost as astounding as Taylor :  
 Two dozen of Italy's exiles who shoot us his  
 Kaisership daily, stern pen-and-ink Brutuses,  
 Who, in Yankee back-parlors, with crucified smile, †  
 Mount serenely their country's funereal pile :  
 Ninety-nine Irish heroes, ferocious rebels  
 'Gainst the Saxon in cis-marine garrets and cellars,  
 Who shake their dread fists o'er the sea and all that, —  
 As long as a copper drops into the hat :  
 Nine hundred Teutonic republicans stark  
 From Vaterland's battles just won — in the Park,  
 \* (And at this just conclusion will surely arrive,  
 That the goodness of earth is more dead than alive.)  
 † Not forgetting their tea and their toast, though, the while.

Who the happy profession of martyrdom  
take  
Whenever it gives them a chance at a  
steak :  
Sixty-two second Washingtons : two or  
three Jacksons :  
And so many everythings-else that it  
racks one's  
Poor memory too much to continue the  
list,  
Especially now they no longer exist ;—  
I would merely observe that you've  
taken to giving  
The puffs that belong to the dead to the  
living,  
And that somehow your trump-of-con-  
temporary-doom's tones  
Is tuned after old dedications and tomb-  
stones."

Here the critic came in and a thistle  
presented — \*  
From a frown to a smile the god's fea-  
tures relented,  
As he stared at his envoy, who, swelling  
with pride,  
To the god's asking look, nothing  
daunted, replied, —  
"You're surprised, I suppose, I was  
absent so long,  
But your godship respecting the lilies  
was wrong ;  
I hunted the garden from one end to  
t'other,  
And got no reward but vexation and  
bother,  
Till, tossed out with weeds in a corner  
to wither,  
This one lily I found and made haste to  
bring hither."

"Did he think I had given him a book  
to review ?  
I ought to have known what the fellow  
would do,"  
Muttered Phœbus aside, "for a thistle  
will pass  
Beyond doubt for the queen of all flow-  
ers with an ass ;  
He has chosen in just the same way as  
he'd choose  
His specimens out of the books he re-  
views ;

\* Turn back now to page—goodness only  
knows what,  
And take a fresh hold on the thread of my  
plot.

And now, as this offers an excellent text,  
I'll give 'em some brief hints on criti-  
cism next."

So, musing a moment, he turned to the  
crowd,  
And, clearing his voice, spoke as follows  
aloud :—

"My friends, in the happier days of  
the muse,  
We were luckily free from such things  
as reviews ;  
Then naught came between with its fog  
to make clearer  
The heart of the poet to that of his  
hearer ;  
Then the poet brought heaven to the  
people, and they  
Felt that they, too, were poets in hear-  
ing his lay ;  
Then the poet was prophet, the past in  
his soul  
Precreated the future, both parts of one  
whole ;  
Then for him there was nothing too great  
or too small,  
For one natural deity sanctified all ;  
Then the bard owned no clipper and  
meter of moods  
Save the spirit of silence that hovers and  
broods  
O'er the seas and the mountains, the  
rivers and woods ;  
He asked not earth's verdict, forgetting  
the clods,  
His soul soared and sang to an audience  
of gods ;  
'T was for them that he measured the  
thought and the line,  
And shaped for their vision the perfect  
design,  
With as glorious a foresight, a balance  
as true,  
As swung out the worlds in the infinite  
blue ;  
Then a glory and greatness invested  
man's heart,  
The universal, which now stands es-  
tranged and apart,  
In the free individual moulded, was  
Art ;  
Then the forms of the Artist seemed  
thrilled with desire  
For something as yet unattained, fuller,  
higher,  
As once with her lips, lifted hands, and  
eyes listening,



And her whole upward soul in her countenance glistening,  
 Eurydice stood — like a beacon unfired,  
 Which, once touched with flame, will leap heav'nward inspired —  
 And waited with answering kindle to mark  
 The first gleam of Orpheus that pained the red Dark.  
 Then painting, song, sculpture did more than relieve  
 The need that men feel to create and believe,  
 And as, in all beauty, who listens with love  
 Hears these words oft repeated — 'beyond and above,'  
 So these seemed to be but the visible sign  
 Of the grasp of the soul after things more divine;  
 They were ladders the Artist erected to climb  
 O'er the narrow horizon of space and of time,  
 And we see there the footsteps by which men had gained  
 To the one rapturous glimpse of the never-attained,  
 As shepherds could erst sometimes trace in the sod  
 The last spurning print of a sky-cleaving god.

“But now, on the poet's dis-privacied moods  
 With *do this* and *do that* the pert critic intrudes;  
 While he thinks he's been barely fulfilling his duty  
 To interpret 'twixt men and their own sense of beauty,  
 And has striven, while others sought honor or pelf,  
 To make his kind happy as he was himself,  
 He finds he's been guilty of horrid offences  
 In all kinds of moods, numbers, genders, and tenses;  
 He's been *ob* and *subjective*, what Kettle calls Pot,  
 Precisely, at all events, what he ought not,  
*You have done this*, says one judge;  
*done that*, says another;  
*You should have done this*, grumbles one;  
*that*, says 't other;

Never mind what he touches, one shrieks out *Taboo!*  
 And while he is wondering what he shall do,  
 Since each suggests opposite topics for song,  
 They all shout together *you're right!*  
 and *you're wrong!*

“Nature fits all her children with something to do,  
 He who would write and can't write, can surely review,  
 Can set up a small booth as critic and sell us his  
 Petty conceit and his pettier jealousies;  
 Thus a lawyer's apprentice, just out of his teens,  
 Will do for the Jeffrey of six magazines;  
 Having read Johnson's lives of the poets half through,  
 There's nothing on earth he's not competent to;  
 He reviews with as much nonchalance as he whistles, —  
 He goes through a book and just picks out the thistles;  
 It matters not whether he blame or commend,  
 If he's bad as a foe, he's far worse as a friend:  
 Let an author but write what's above his poor scope,  
 He goes to work gravely and twists up a rope,  
 And, inviting the world to see punishment done,  
 Hangs himself up to bleach in the wind and the sun;  
 'T is delightful to see, when a man comes along  
 Who has anything in him peculiar and strong,  
 Every cockboat that swims clear its fierce (pop) gundeck at him,  
 And make as he passes its ludicrous Peck at him —”

Here Miranda came up and began,  
 “As to that —”  
 Apollo at once seized his gloves, cane, and hat,  
 And, seeing the place getting rapidly cleared,  
 I, too, snatched my notes and forthwith disappeared.

## LETTER FROM BOSTON.

December, 1846.

DEAR M. ———\*

By way of saving time,  
I'll do this letter up in rhyme,  
Whose slim stream through four pages  
flows  
Ere one is packed with tight-screwed  
prose,  
Threading the tube of an epistle,  
Smooth as a child's breath through a  
whistle.

The great attraction now of all  
Is the "Bazaar" at Faneuil Hall,  
Where swarm the anti-slavery folks  
As thick, dear Miller, as your jokes.  
There 's GARRISON, his features very  
Benign for an incendiary,  
Beaming forth sunshine through his  
glasses

On the surrounding lads and lasses,  
(No bee could blither be, or brisker,) —  
A Pickwick somehow turned John Ziska,  
His bump of firmness swelling up  
Like a rye cupcake from its cup.  
And there, too, was his English tea-set,  
Which in his ear a kind of flea set,  
His Uncle Samuel for its beauty  
Demanding sixty dollars duty,  
( 'T was natural Sam should serve his  
trunk ill,

For G., you know, has cut his uncle,)  
Whereas, had he but once made tea in 't,  
His uncle's ear had had the flea in 't,  
There being not a cent of duty  
On any pot that ever drew tea. †

There was MARIA CHAPMAN, too,

\* Mr. James Miller McKim.

† When Mr. Garrison visited Edinburgh in 1846, a handsome silver tea-set was presented to him by his friends in that city. On the arrival of this gift at the Boston custom-house, it was charged with an enormous entrance duty which would have been remitted if the articles had

With her swift eyes of clear steel-blue,  
The coiled-up mainspring of the Fair,  
Originating everywhere  
The expansive force without a sound  
That whirls a hundred wheels around,  
Herself meanwhile as calm and still  
As the bare crown of Prospect Hill;  
A noble woman, brave and apt,  
Cumæan sibyl not more rapt,  
Who might, with those fair tresses shorn,  
The Maid of Orleans' casque have worn,  
Herself the Joan of our Ark,  
For every shaft a shining mark.

And there, too, was ELIZA FOLLEN,  
Who scatters fruit-creating pollen  
Where'er a blossom she can find  
Hardy enough for Truth's north wind,  
Each several point of all her face  
Tremblingly bright with the inward  
grace,  
As if all motion gave it light  
Like phosphorescent seas at night.

There jokes our EDMUND, ‡ plainly son  
Of him who bearded Jefferson,  
A non-resistant by conviction,  
But with a bump in contradiction,  
So that whene'er it gets a chance  
His pen delights to play the lance,  
And — you may doubt it, or believe it —  
Full at the head of Joshua Leavitt  
The very calumet he 'd launch,  
And scourge him with the olive branch.  
A master with the foils of wit,  
'T is natural he should love a hit;  
A gentleman, withal, and scholar,  
Only base things excite his cholera,

ever been used. It was supposed that if the owner had not been the leader of the unpopular abolitionists, this heavy impost would not have been laid on a friendly British tribute to an eminent American.

‡ Edmund Quincy.

And then his satire's keen and thin  
As the lithe blade of Saladin.  
Good letters are a gift apart,  
And his are gems of Flemish art,  
True offspring of the fireside Muse,  
Not a rag-gathering of news  
Like a new hopfield which is all poles,  
But of one blood with Horace Walpole's.

There, with one hand behind his back,  
Stands PHILLIPS buttoned in a sack,  
Our Attic orator, our Chatham;  
Old fogies, when he lightens at 'em,  
Shriveled like leaves; to him 't is granted  
Always to say the word that's wanted,  
So that he seems but speaking clearer  
The tiptop thought of every hearer;  
Each flash his brooding heart lets fall  
Fires what's combustible in all,  
And sends the applauses bursting in  
Like an exploded magazine.  
His eloquence no frothy show,  
The gutter's street-polluted flow,  
No Mississippi's yellow flood  
Whose shoalness can't be seen for  
mud;—

So simply clear, serenely deep,  
So silent-strong its graceful sweep,  
None measures its unrippling force  
Who has not striven to stem its course;  
How fare their barques who think to  
play

With smooth Niagara's mane of spray,  
Let Austin's total shipwreck say.\*  
He never spoke a word too much—  
Except of Story, or some such,  
Whom, though condemned by ethics  
strict,  
The heart refuses to convict.

Beyond, a crater in each eye,  
Sways brown, broad-shouldered PILLS-  
BURY,  
Who tears up words like trees by the  
roots,

A Theseus in stout cow-hide boots,  
The wager of eternal war  
Against that loathsome Minotaur  
To whom we sacrifice each year  
The best blood of our Athens here,  
(Dear M., pray brush up your Lem-  
priere.)

\* On the occasion of the murder of Rev. Eli-  
jah P. Lovejoy, editor of an anti-slavery news-  
paper at Alton, Illinois, an indignation meeting  
was held in Boston, at which Mr. Austin, Attor-  
ney-General of Massachusetts, made a violent

A terrible denouncer he,  
Old Sinai burns unquenchably  
Upon his lips; he well might be a  
Hot-blazing soul from fierce Judea,  
Habakkuk, Ezra, or Hosea.  
His words are red-hot iron searers,  
And nightmare-like he mounts his hear-  
ers,

Spurring them like avenging Fate, or  
As Waterton his alligator.

Hard by, as calm as summer even,  
Smiles the reviled and pelted STEPHEN,†  
The unappeasable Boanerges  
To all the Churches and the Clergies,  
The grim *savant* who, to complete  
His own peculiar cabinet,  
Contrived to label 'mong his kicks  
One from the followers of Hicks;  
Who studied mineralogy  
Not with soft book upon the knee,  
But learned the properties of stones  
By contact sharp of flesh and bones,  
And made the *experimentum crucis*  
With his own body's vital juices;  
A man with caoutchouc endurance,  
A perfect gem for life insurance,  
A kind of maddened John the Bap-  
tist,

To whom the harshest word comes apt-  
est,

Who, struck by stone or brick ill-starred,  
Hurls back an epithet as hard,  
Which, deadlier than stone or brick,  
Has a propensity to stick.  
His oratory is like the scream  
Of the iron-horse's frenzied steam  
Which warns the world to leave wide  
space

For the black engine's swerveless race.  
Ye men with neckcloths white, I warn  
you—

*Habet* a whole haymow in cornu.

A Judith there, turned Quakeress,  
Sits ABBY in her modest dress,‡  
Serving a table quietly,  
As if that mild and downcast eye  
Flashed never, with its scorn intense,  
More than Medea's eloquence.  
So the same force which shakes its dread  
Far-blazing locks o'er Ætna's head.

pro-slavery speech, which called forth a crush-  
ing reply from Wendell Phillips, who thenceforth  
became a main pillar of abolitionism.

† Stephen S. Foster.

‡ Abby Kelley.



Along the wires in silence fares  
 And messages of commerce bears.  
 No nobler gift of heart and brain,  
 No life more white from spot or stain,  
 Was e'er on Freedom's altar laid  
 Than hers, the simple Quaker maid.

These last three (leaving in the lurch  
 Some other themes) assault the Church,  
 Who therefore writes them in her lists  
 As Satan's limbs and atheists ;  
 For each sect has one argument  
 Whereby the rest to hell are sent,  
 Which serves them like the Graiæ's  
 tooth,  
 Passed round in turn from mouth to  
 mouth ; —

If any *ism* should arise,  
 They look on it with constable's eyes,  
 Tie round its neck a heavy *athe-*,  
 And give it kittens' hydropathy.  
 This trick with other (useful very) tricks  
 Is laid to the Babylonian *meretrix*,  
 But 't was in vogue before her day  
 Wherever priesthoods had their way,  
 And Buddha's Popes with this struck  
 dumb

The followers of Fi and Fum.  
 Well, if the world, with prudent fear,  
 Pay God a seventh of the year,  
 And as a Farmer, who would pack,  
 All his religion in one stack,  
 For this world works six days in seven  
 And idles on the seventh for Heaven,

Expecting, for his Sunday's sowing,  
 In the next world to go a-mowing  
 The crop of all his meeting-going ; —  
 If the poor Church, by power enticed,  
 Finds none so infidel as Christ,  
 Quite backward reads his Gospel meek,  
 (As 't were in Hebrew writ, not Greek,)  
 Fencing the gallows and the word  
 With conscripts drafted from his word,  
 And makes one gate of Heaven so wide  
 That the rich orthodox might ride  
 Through on their camels, while the poor  
 Squirm through the scant, unyielding  
 door,  
 Which, of the Gospel's straitest size,  
 Is narrower than bead-needles' eyes,  
 What wonder World and Church should  
 call

The true faith atheistical ?

Yet, after all, 'twixt you and me,  
 Dear Miller, I could never see  
 That Sin's and Error's ugly smirch  
 Stained the walls only of the Church ;  
 There are good priests, and men who  
 take

Freedom's torn cloak for lucre's sake ;  
 I can't believe the Church so strong,  
 As some men do, for Right or Wrong.  
 But, for this subject (long and vext)  
 I must refer you to my next,  
 As also for a list exact  
 Of goods with which the Hall was  
 packed.



**THE BIGLOW PAPERS.**





## NOTICES OF AN INDEPENDENT PRESS.

[I HAVE observed, reader (bene- or malevolent, as it may happen), that it is customary to append to the second editions of books, and to the second works of authors, short sentences commendatory of the first, under the title of *Notices of the Press*. These, I have been given to understand, are procurable at certain established rates, payment being made either in money or advertising patronage by the publisher, or by an adequate outlay of servility on the part of the author. Considering these things with myself, and also that such notices are neither intended, nor generally believed, to convey any real opinions, being a purely ceremonial accompaniment of literature, and resembling certificates to the virtues of various morbiferal panaceas, I conceived that it would be not only more economical to prepare a sufficient number of such myself, but also more immediately subservient to the end in view to prefix them to this our primary edition rather than await the contingency of a second, when they would seem to be of small utility. To delay attaching the *bobs* until the second attempt at flying the kite would indicate but a slender experience in that useful art. Neither has it escaped my notice, nor failed to afford me matter of reflection, that, when a circus or a caravan is about to visit Jaalam, the initial step is to send forward large and highly ornamented bills of performance to be hung in the bar-room and the post-office. These having been sufficiently gazed at, and beginning to lose their attractiveness except for the flies, and, truly, the boys also (in whom I find it impossible to repress, even during school-hours, certain oral and telegraphic communications concerning the expected show), upon some fine morning the band enters in a gayly painted wagon, or triumphal chariot, and with noisy advertisement, by means of brass, wood, and sheepskin, makes the circuit of our startled village streets. Then, as the exciting sounds draw nearer and nearer, do I de-

siderate those eyes of Aristarchus, "whose looks were as a breeching to a boy." Then do I perceive, with vain regret of wasted opportunities, the advantage of a pancratic or pantechnic education, since he is most revered by my little subjects who can throw the cleanest sumerset or walk most securely upon the revolving cask. The story of the Pied Piper becomes for the first time credible to me (albeit confirmed by the Hameliners dating their legal instruments from the period of his exit), as I behold how those strains, without pretence of magical potency, bewitch the pupillary legs, nor leave to the pedagogic an entire self-control. For these reasons, lest my kingly prerogative should suffer diminution, I prorogue my restless commons, whom I follow into the street, chiefly lest some mischief may chance befall them. After the manner of such a band, I send forward the following notices of domestic manufacture, to make brazen proclamation, not unconscious of the advantage which will accrue, if our little craft, *cymbula subtilis*, shall seem to leave port with a clipping breeze, and to carry, in nautical phrase, a bone in her mouth. Nevertheless, I have chosen, as being more equitable, to prepare some also sufficiently objurgatory, that readers of every taste may find a dish to their palate. I have modelled them upon actually existing specimens, preserved in my own cabinet of natural curiosities. One, in particular, I had copied with tolerable exactness from a notice of one of my own discourses, which, from its superior tone and appearance of vast experience, I concluded to have been written by a man at least three hundred years of age, though I recollected no existing instance of such antediluvian longevity. Nevertheless, I afterwards discovered the author to be a young gentleman preparing for the ministry under the direction of one of my brethren in a neighboring town, and whom I had once instinctively corrected in a

Latin quantity. But this I have been forced to omit, from its too great length. — H. W.]

*From the Universal Literary Universe.*

Full of passages which rivet the attention of the reader. . . . Under a rustic garb, sentiments are conveyed which should be committed to the memory and engraven on the heart of every moral and social being. . . . We consider this a *unique* performance. . . . We hope to see it soon introduced into our common schools. . . . Mr. Wilbur has performed his duties as editor with excellent taste and judgment. . . . This is a vein which we hope to see successfully prosecuted. . . . We hail the appearance of this work as a long stride toward the formation of a purely aboriginal, indigenous, native, and American literature. We rejoice to meet with an author national enough to break away from the slavish deference, too common among us, to English grammar and orthography. . . . Where all is so good, we are at a loss how to make extracts. . . . On the whole, we may call it a volume which no library, pretending to entire completeness, should fall to place upon its shelves.

*From the Higginbottomopolis Snapping-turtle.*

A collection of the merest balderdash and doggerel that it was ever our bad fortune to lay eyes on. The author is a vulgar buffoon, and the editor a talkative, tedious old fool. We use strong language, but should any of our readers peruse the book, (from which calamity Heaven preserve them!) they will find reasons for it thick as the leaves of Vallumbrozer, or, to use a still more expressive comparison, as the combined heads of author and editor. The work is wretchedly got up. . . . We should like to know how much *British gold* was pocketed by this libeller of our country and her purest patriots.

*From the Oldfogrumville Mentor.*

We have not had time to do more than glance through this handsomely printed volume, but the name of its respectable editor, the Rev. Mr. Wilbur, of Jaalam, will afford a sufficient guaranty for the worth of its contents. . . . The paper is white, the type clear, and the volume of a convenient and attractive size. . . . In reading this elegantly executed work, it has seemed to us that a passage or two might have been retrenched with advantage, and that the general style of diction was susceptible of a higher polish. . . . On the whole, we may safely leave the ungrateful task of criticism to the reader. We will barely suggest, that in volumes intended, as this is, for the illustration of a provincial dialect and turns of expression, a dash of humor or satire might be thrown in with advantage. . . . The work is admirably got up. . . . This work will form an appropriate ornament to the centre-table. It is beautifully printed, on paper of an excellent quality.

*From the Decay Bulwark.*

We should be wanting in our duty as the conductor of that tremendous engine, a public press, as an American, and as a man, did we allow such an opportunity as is presented to us by "The Biglow Papers" to pass by without entering our earnest protest against such attempts (now, alas! too common) at demoralizing the public sentiment. Under a wretched mask of stupid drollery, slavery, war, the social glass, and, in short, all the valuable and time-honored institutions justly dear to our common humanity and especially to republicans, are made the butt of coarse and senseless ribaldry by this low-minded scribbler. It is time that the respectable and religious portion of our community should be aroused to the alarming inroads of foreign Jacobinism, sansculottism, and infidelity. It is a fearful proof of the wide-spread nature of this contagion, that these secret stabs at religion and virtue are given from under the cloak (*credite, posteri!*) of a clergyman. It is a mournful spectacle indeed to the patriot and Christian to see liberality and new ideas (falsely so called, — they are as old as Eden) invading the sacred precincts of the pulpit. . . . On the whole, we consider this volume as one of the first shocking results which we predicted would spring out of the late French "Revolution" (!).

*From the Bungtown Copper and Comprehensive Tocsin (a try-weekly family journal).*

Altogether an admirable work. . . . Full of humor, boisterous, but delicate, — of wit withering and scorching, yet combined with a pathos cool as morning dew, — of satire ponderous as the mace of Richard, yet keen as the scymitar of Saladin. . . . A work full of "mountain-mirth," mischievous as Puck, and lightsome as Ariel. . . . We know not whether to admire most the genial, fresh, and discursive concinnity of the author, or his playful fancy, weird imagination, and compass of style, at once both objective and subjective. . . . We might indulge in some criticisms, but, were the author other than he is, he would be a different being. As it is, he has a wonderful *pose*, which flits from flower to flower, and bears the reader irresistibly along on its eagle pinions (like Gany-mede) to the "highest heaven of invention." . . . We love a book so purely objective. . . . Many of his pictures of natural scenery have an extraordinary subjective clearness and fidelity. . . . In fine, we consider this as one of the most extraordinary volumes of this or any age. We know of no English author who could have written it. It is a work to which the proud genius of our country, standing with one foot on the Aroostook and the other on the Rio Grande, and holding up the star-spangled banner amid the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds, may point with bewildering scorn of the punier efforts of enslaved Europe. . . . We hope soon to encounter our author among those higher walks of literature in which he is evidently capable of achieving enduring fame. Already we should be inclined to assign him a high position in the bright galaxy of our American bards.



*From the Saltriver Pilot and Flag of Freedom.*

A volume in bad grammar and worse taste. . . . While the pieces here collected were confined to their appropriate sphere in the corners of obscure newspapers, we considered them wholly beneath contempt, but, as the author has chosen to come forward in this public manner, he must expect the lash he so richly merits. . . . Contemptible slanders. . . . Vildest Billingsgate. . . . Has raked all the gutters of our language. . . . The most pure, upright, and consistent politicians not safe from his malignant venom. . . . General Cushing comes in for a share of his vile calumnies. . . . The Reverend Homer Wilbur is a disgrace to his cloth. . . .

*From the World-Harmonic-Eolian-Attachment.*

Speech is silver: silence is golden. No utterance more Orphic than this. While, therefore, as highest author, we reverence him whose works continue heroically unwritten, we have also our hopeful word for those who with pen (from wing of goose loud-cackling, or seraph God-commissioned) record the thing that is revealed. . . . Under mask of quaintest irony, we detect here the deep, storm-tost (nigh shipwrecked) soul, thunder-scarred, semi-articulate, but ever climbing hopefully toward the peaceful summits of an Infinite Sorrow. . . . Yes, thou poor, forlorn Hosea, with Hebrew fire-flaming soul in thee, for thee also this life of ours has not been without its aspects of heavenliest pity and laughingest mirth. Conceivable enough! Through coarse Thersites-cloak, we have revelation of the heart, wild-glowing, world-clasping, that is in him. Bravely he grapples with the life-problem as it presents itself to him, uncombed, shaggy, careless of the "nicer proprieties," inexpert of "elegant diction," yet with voice audible enough to whose hath ears, up there on the gravelly side-hills, or down on the splashy, indiarubber-like salt-marshes of native Jaalam. To this soul also the *Necessity of Creating* somewhat has unveiled its awful front. If not *Edipuses* and *Electras* and *Alcestises*, then in God's name *Birdofredum Sawins*! These also shall get born into the world, and filch (if so need) a Zingali subsistence therein, these lank, omnivorous Yankees of his. He shall paint the Seen, since the Unseen will not sit to him. Yet in him also are *Nibelungen-lays*, and *Iliads*, and *Ulysses-wanderings*, and *Divine Comedies*, — if only once he could come at them! Therein lies much, nay all; for what truly is this which we name *All*, but that which we do not possess? . . . Glimpses also are given us of an old father *Ezekiel*, not without paternal pride, as is the wont of such. A brown, parchment-headed old man of the geoponic or bucolic species, gray-eyed, we fancy, *queued* perhaps, with much weather-cunning and plentiful September-gale memories, bidding fair in good time to become the *Oldest Inhabitant*. After such hasty apparition, he vanishes and is seen no more. . . . Of "Rev. Homer Wilbur, A. M., Pastor of the First Church in Jaalam," we have small care to speak here. Spare touch in him of his *Melesigenes* namesake, save, haply, the — blindness! A tolerably caliginose, nephe-

legeretous elderly gentleman, with infinite faculty of sermonizing, muscularized by long practice, and excellent digestive apparatus, and, for the rest, well-meaning enough, and with small private illuminations (somewhat tallowy, it is to be feared) of his own. To him, there, "Pastor of the First Church in Jaalam," our Hosea presents himself as a quite inexplicable Sphinx-riddle. A rich poverty of Latin and Greek, — so far is clear enough, even to eyes peering myopic through horn-lensed editorial spectacles, — but naught farther? O purblind, well-meaning, altogether fuscous *Melesigenes-Wilbur*, there are things in him incommunicable by stroke of birch! Did it ever enter that old bewildered head of thine that there was the *Possibility of the Infinite* in him? To thee, quite wingless (and even featherless) biped, has not so much even as a dream of wings ever come? "Talented young parishioner"? Among the Arts whereof thou art *Magister*, does that of *seeing* happen to be one? Unhappy *Artium Magister*! Somehow a Nemean lion, fulvous, torrid-eyed, dry-nursed in broad-howling sand-wildernesses of a sufficiently rare spirit-Libya (it may be supposed) has got whelped among the sheep. Already he stands wild-glaring, with feet clutching the ground as with oak-roots, gathering for a Remus-spring over the walls of thy little fold. In Heaven's name, go not near him with that flybite crook of thine! In good time, thou painful preacher, thou wilt go to the appointed place of departed Artillery-Election Sermons, Right-Hands of Fellowship, and Results of Councils, gathered to thy spiritual fathers with much Latin of the Epitaphial sort; thou, too, shalt have thy reward; but on him the *Eumenides* have looked, not *Xantippes* of the pit, snake-tressed, finger-threatening, but radiantly calm as on antique gems; for him paws impatient the winged courser of the gods, champung unwelcome bit; him the starry deeps, the empyrean glooms, and far-flashing splendors await.

*From the Onion Grove Phoenix.*

A talented young townsman of ours, recently returned from a Continental tour, and who is already favorably known to our readers by his sprightly letters from abroad which have graced our columns, called at our office yesterday. We learn from him, that, having enjoyed the distinguished privilege, while in Germany, of an introduction to the celebrated *Von Humbug*, he took the opportunity to present that eminent man with a copy of the "Biglow Papers." The next morning he received the following note, which he has kindly furnished us for publication. We prefer to print it *verbatim*, knowing that our readers will readily forgive the few errors into which the illustrious writer has fallen, through ignorance of our language.

## "HIGH-WORTHY MISTER!

"I shall also now especially happy starve, because I have more or less a work one those aboriginal Red-Men seen in which have I so deaf an interest ever taken full-worthy on the self shew with our Gottschek to be upset.

"Pardon my in the English-speech un-prag-tice!

"VON HUMBUG."

He also sent with the above note a copy of his famous work on "Cosmetics," to be presented to Mr. Biglow; but this was taken from our friend by the English custom-house officers, probably through a petty national spite. No doubt, it has by this time found its way into the British Museum. We trust this outrage will be exposed in all our American papers. We shall do our best to bring it to the notice of the State Department. Our numerous readers will share in the pleasure we experience at seeing our young and vigorous national literature thus encouragingly patted on the head by this venerable and world-renowned German. We love to see these reciprocations of good-feeling between the different branches of the great Anglo-Saxon race.

[The following genuine "notice" having met my eye, I gladly insert a portion of it here, the more especially as it contains one of Mr. Biglow's poems not elsewhere printed. — H. W.]

*From the Jaalam Independent Blunderbuss.*

. . . . But, while we lament to see our young townsman thus mingling in the heated contests of party politics, we think we detect in him the presence of talents which, if properly directed, might give an innocent pleasure to many. As a proof that he is competent to the production of other kinds of poetry, we copy for our readers a short fragment of a pastoral by him, the manuscript of which was loaned us by a friend. The title of it is "The Courtin'."

ZEKLE crep' up, quite unbeknown,  
An' peeked in thru the winder,  
An' there sot Huldy all alone,  
'ith no one nigh to hender.

Agin' the chimbly crooknecks hung,  
An' in amongst 'em rusted  
The ole queen's-arm thet gran'ther Young  
Fetched back from Concord busted.

The wannut logs shot sparkles out  
Towards the pootiest, bless her!

An' leetle fires danced all about  
The chiny on the dresser.

The very room, coz she wuz in,  
Looked warm from floor to cellin',  
An' she looked full ez rosy agin  
Ez th' apples she wuz peelin'.

She heerd a foot an' knowed it, tu,  
Araspin' on the scraper, —  
All ways to once her feelins flew  
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,  
Some doubtfle o' the seekle;  
His heart kep' goin' pitypat,  
But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yet she gin her cheer a jerk  
Ez though she wished him furdur  
An' on her apples kep' to work  
Ez ef a wager spurred her.

"You want to see my Pa, I spose?"  
"Wal, no; I come designin' —"  
"To see my Ma? She 's sprinklin' clo'es  
Agin to-morrow's 'inin'."

He stood a spell on one foot fust  
Then stood a spell on tother,  
An' on which one he felt the wust  
He could n't ha' told ye, nuther.

Sez he, "I 'd better call agin";  
Sez she, "Think likely, *Mister*";  
The last word pricked him like a pin,  
An' — wal, he up and kist her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,  
Huldy sot pale ez ashes,  
All kind o' smily round the lips  
An' teary round the lashes.

Her blood riz quick, though, like the tide  
Down to the Bay o' Fundy,  
An' all I know is they wuz cried  
In meetin', come nex Sunday.

SATIS multis sese emptores futuros libri professis, Georgius Nichols, Cantabrigien-sis, opus emittit de parte gravi sed adhuc neglecta historiae naturalis, cum titulo sequente, videlicet:

*Conatus ad Delineationem naturalem nonnihil perfectiorem Scarabaei Bombilatoris, vulgo dicti HUMBUG, ab HOMERO WILBUR, Artium Magistro, Societatis historico-naturalis Jaalamensis Praeside (Secretario, Socioque (eheu!) singulo), multarumque aliarum Societatum eruditatum (sive ineruditatum) tam domesticarum quam transmarinarum Socio — forsitan futuro.*

## PROEMIIUM.

LECTORI BENEVOLO S.

Toga scholastica nondum deposita, quum systemata varia entomologica, a viris ejus scientiae cultoribus studiosissimis summa diligentia aedificata, penitus indagassem, non fuit quin luctuose omnibus in iis, quamvis aliter laude dignissimis, hiatum magni momenti perciperem. Tunc, nescio quo motu superiore impulsus, aut qua captus dulcedine operis, ad eum implendum (Curtius alter) me solemniter devovi. Nec ab isto labore, *Saporis* imposito, abstinui antequam tractatulum sufficienter inconcinnum lingua vernacula perfeceram. Inde, juveniliter tumefactus, et barathri



ἡνεπεί τῶν βιβλιοπωλῶν (necnon "Publici Legentis") nusquam explorato, me composuisse quod quasi placentas præfervidas (ut sic dicam) homines ingurgitaret credidi. Sed, quum huic et alio bibliopolæ MSS. mea submississem et nihil solidius responsione valde negativa in Museum meum retulisses, horror ingens atque misericordia, ob crassitudinem Lambertianam in cerebris homuncolorum istius muneris cœlesti quadam ira infixam, me invasere. Extemplo mei solius impensis librum edere decrevi, nihil omnino dubitans quin "Mundus Scientificus" (ut aiunt) crumenam meam ampliter repleret. Nullam, attamen, ex agro illo meo parvulo segetem demessui, præter gaudium vacuum bene de Republica merendi. Iste panis meus pretiosus super aquas literarias fœculentas præfidenter jactus, quasi Harpyiarum quarundam (scilicet bibliopolarum istorum facinosorum supradictorum) tactu rancidis, intra perpaucos dies mihi domum rediit. Et, quum ipse tali victu ali non tolerarem, primum in mentem venit pistori (typographo nempe) nihilo minus solvendum esse. Animum non idcirco demisi, imo æque ac pueri naviculas suas penes se lino retinent (eo ut e recto cursu delapsas ad ripam retrahant), sic ego Argô meam chartaceam fluctibus laborantem a quæsitu velleris aurei, ipse potius tonsus pelleque exutus, mente solida revocavi. Metaphoram ut mutem, *boomarangam* meam a scopo aberrantem retraxi, dum majore vi, occasione ministrante, adversus Fortunam intorquerem. Ast mihi, talia volenti, et, sicut Saturnus ille *παῖδοβόρος*, liberos intellectus mei deprecere fidenti, casus miserandus, nec antea inauditus, supervenit. Nam, ut ferunt Scythas pietatis causa et parsimonie, parentes suos mortuos devorasse, sic filius hic meus primogenitus, Scythis ipsis minus mansuetus, patrem vivum totum et calcitrantem exsorbere enixus est. Nec tamen hac de causa sobolem meam esurientem exheredavi. Sed famem istam pro valido testimonio virilitatis roborisque potius habui, cibumque ad eam satiandam, salva paterna mea carne, petii. Et quia bilem illam scaturientem ad æs etiam concoquendum idoneam esse estimabam, unde æs alienum, ut minoris pretii, haberem, circumspexi. Rebus ita se habentibus, ab avunculo meo Johanne Doolittle, Armigero, impetravi ut pecunias necessarias suppeditaret, ne opus esset mihi universitatem relinquendi antequam ad gradum primum in artibus pervenissem. Tunc ego, salvum facere patronum meum munificum maxime cupiens, omnes libros primæ editionis operis mei non venditos una cum

privilegio in omne ævum ejusdem imprimendi et edendi avunculo meo dicto pigneravi. Ex illo die, atro lapide notando, curæ vociferantes familiae singulis annis crescentis eo usque insultabant ut nunquam tam carum pignus e vinculis istia ahenis solvere possem.

Avunculo vero nuper mortuo, quum inter alios consanguineos testamenti ejus lectionem audiendi causa advenissem, erectis auribus verba talia sequentia accepi: — "Quoniam persuasum habeo meum dilectum nepotem Homerum, longa et intima rerum angustarum domi experientia, aptissimum esse qui divitias tueatur, beneficentique ac prudenter his divinis creditis utatur, — ergo, motus hiis cogitationibus, exque amore meo in illum magno, do, legoque nepoti caro meo supranominato omnes singularesque istas possessiones nec ponderabiles nec computabiles meas quæ sequuntur, scilicet : quingentos libros quos mihi pigneravit dictus Homerus, anno lucis 1792, cum privilegio edendi et repetendi opus istud 'scientificum' (quod dicunt) suum, si sic elegerit. Tamen D. O. M. precor oculos Homeri nepotis mei ita aperiat eumque moveat, ut libros istos in bibliotheca unius e plurimis castellis suis Hispaniensibus tuto abscondat."

His verbis (vix credibilibus) auditis, cor meum in pectore exsultavit. Deinde, quoniam tractatus Anglice scriptus spem auctoris fefellerat, quippe quum studium Historiæ Naturalis in Republica nostra inter factionis strepitum languescat, Latine versum edere statui, et eo potius quia nescio quomodo disciplina academica et duo diplomata proficiant, nisi quod peritos linguarum omnino mortuarum (et dam-nandarum, ut dicebat iste *πανούργος* Gulielmus Cobbett) nos faciant.

Et mihi adhuc superstes est tota illa editio prima, quam quasi crepitaculum per quod dentes caninos dentibam retineo.

#### OPERIS SPECIMEN.

(Ad exemplum *Johannis Physiphilii specimenis Monachologie.*)

12. S. B. *Militaris*, WILBUR. *Carnifex*, JABLONSK. *Profanus*, DESFONT.

[Male hanc speciem *Cyclopem* Fabricius vocat, ut qui singulo oculo ad quod sui interest distinguitur. Melius vero Isaacus Outis nulum inter S. milit. S. que Belzebul (Fabric. 152) discrimen esse defendit.]

Habitat civitat. Americ. austral.

Aureis lineis splendidus; plerumque tamen sordidus, utpote lanienas valde frequentans, fetore sanguinis allectus. Amat quodque insuper septa apricari, neque inde, nisi maxima conatione detruditur. *Candidatus* ergo populariter vocatus. Caput cristam quasi penna-



rum ostendit. Pro cibo vaccam publicam calide mulget; abdomen enorme; facultas suctus haud facile estimanda. Otiosus, fatuus; ferox nihilominus, semperque dimicare paratus. Tortuose repit.

Capite sæpe maxima cum cura dissecto, ne illud rudimentum etiam cerebri commune omnibus prope insectis detegere poteram.

Unam de hoc S. milit. rem singularem notavi; nam S. Guineens. (Fabric. 143) servos facit, et ideo a multis summa in reverentia habitus, quasi scintillas rationis pæne humanæ demonstrans.

24. S. B. *Criticus*, WILBUR. *Zoilus*, FABRIC. *Pygmæus*, CARLSEN.

[Stultissime Johannes Stryx cum S. punctato (Fabric. 64-109) confundit. Specimina quamplurima scrutationi microscopicae subjecti, nunquam tamen unum ulla indicia puncti cujusvis prorsus ostendentem inveni.]

Præcipue formidolosus, insectatusque, in proxima rima anonyma sese abscondit, *we, we*, creberrime stridens. Ineptus, segnapes.

Habitat ubique gentium; in sicco; nidum suum terebratione indefessa ædificans. Cibus. Libros depascit; siccos præcipue.

*MELIBŒUS-HIPPONAX.*

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THE  
**Biglow Papers,**

EDITED,

WITH AN INTRODUCTION, NOTES, GLOSSARY, AND  
COPIOUS INDEX,

BY

HOMER WILBUR, A. M.,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN JAALAM, AND (PROSPECTIVE) MEMBER OF MANY  
LITERARY, LEARNED, AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES,

*(for which see page 165.)*

The ploughman's whistle, or the trivial flute,  
Finds more respect than great Apollo's lute.

*Quarles's Emblems, B. ii. E. 8.*

**Margaritas, munde porcine, calcâsti: en, siliquas accipe.**  
*Jac. Car. Fil. ad Pub. Leg. § 2*

## NOTE TO TITLE-PAGE.

It will not have escaped the attentive eye, that I have, on the title-page, omitted those honorary appendages to the editorial name which not only add greatly to the value of every book, but whet and exacerbate the appetite of the reader. For not only does he surmise that an honorary membership of literary and scientific societies implies a certain amount of necessary distinction on the part of the recipient of such decorations, but he is willing to trust himself more entirely to an author who writes under the fearful responsibility of involving the reputation of such bodies as the *S. Archæol. Dahom.* or the *Acad. Lit. et Scient. Kamtschat.* I cannot but think that the early editions of Shakespeare and Milton would have met with more rapid and general acceptance, but for the barrenness of their respective title-pages; and I believe that, even now, a publisher of the works of either of those justly distinguished men would find his account in procuring their admission to the membership of learned bodies on the Continent, — a proceeding no whit more incongruous than the reversal of the judgment against Socrates, when he was already more than twenty centuries beyond the reach of antidotes, and when his memory had acquired a deserved respectability. I conceive that it was a feeling of the importance of this precaution which induced Mr. Locke to style himself "Gent." on the title-page of his Essay, as who should say to his readers that they could receive his metaphysics on the honor of a gentleman.

Nevertheless, finding that, without descending to a smaller size of type than would have been compatible with the dignity of the several societies to be named, I could not compress my intended list within the limits of a single page, and thinking, moreover, that the act would carry with it an air of decorous modesty, I have chosen to take the reader aside, as I were, into my private closet, and there

not only exhibit to him the diplomas which I already possess, but also to furnish him with a prophetic vision of those which I may, without undue presumption, hope for, as not beyond the reach of human ambition and attainment. And I am the rather induced to this from the fact that my name has been unaccountably dropped from the last triennial catalogue of our beloved *Alma Mater*. Whether this is to be attributed to the difficulty of Latinizing any of those honorary adjuncts (with a complete list of which I took care to furnish the proper persons nearly a year beforehand), or whether it had its origin in any more culpable motives, I forbear to consider in this place, the matter being in course of painful investigation. But, however this may be, I felt the omission the more keenly, as I had, in expectation of the new catalogue, enriched the library of the Jaalam Athenæum with the old one then in my possession, by which means it has come about that my children will be deprived of a never-wearying winter-evening's amusement in looking out the name of their parent in that distinguished roll. Those harmless innocents had at least committed no — but I forbear, having intrusted my reflections and animadversions on this painful topic to the safe-keeping of my private diary, intended for posthumous publication. I state this fact here, in order that certain nameless individuals, who are, perhaps, overmuch congratulating themselves upon my silence, may know that a rod is in pickle which the vigorous hand of a justly incensed posterity will apply to their memories.

The careful reader will note that, in the list which I have prepared, I have included the names of several Cisatlantic societies to which a place is not commonly assigned in processions of this nature. I have ventured to do this, not only to encourage native ambition and genius, but also because I have never been able to



perceive in what way distance (unless we suppose them at the end of a lever) could increase the weight of learned bodies. As far as I have been able to extend my researches among such stuffed specimens as occasionally reach America, I have discovered no generic difference between the antipodal *Fogrum Japonicum* and the *F. Americanum* sufficiently common in our own immediate neighborhood. Yet, with a becoming deference to the popular belief that distinctions of this sort are enhanced in value by every additional mile they travel, I have intermixed the names of some tolerably distant literary and other associations with the rest.

I add here, also, an advertisement, which, that it may be the more readily understood by those persons especially interested therein, I have written in that curtailed and otherwise maltreated canine Latin, to the writing and reading of which they are accustomed.

OMNIB. PER TOT. ORB. TERRAR.  
CATALOG. ACADEM. EDD.

~ Minim. gent. diplom. ab inclityss. acad. vest. orans, vir. honorand. operosiss., at sol. ut sciat. quant. glor. nom. meum (dipl. fort. concess.) catal. vest. temp. futur. affer., ill. subjec., addit. omnib. titul. honorar. qu. adh. non tant. opt. quam probab. put.

\* \* \* *Litt. Uncial. distinc. ut Præs. S. Hist. Nat. Jaal.*

*HOMERUS WILBUR*, Mr., Episc. Jaalam, S. T. D. 1850, et Yal. 1849, et Neo-Cæs. et Brun. et Gulielm. 1852, et Gul. et Mar. et Bowd. et Georgiop. et Viridimont. et Columb. Nov. Ebor. 1853, et Amherst. et Watervill. et S. Jarlath. Hib. et S. Mar. et S. Joseph. et S. And. Scot. 1854, et Nashvill. et Dart. et Dickins. et Concord. et Wash. et Columbian. et Charlest. et Jeff. et Dubl. et Oxon. et Cantab. et Cæt. 1855, P. U. N. C. H. et J. U. D. Gott. et Osnab. et Heidelb. 1860, et Acad. BORE US. Berolin. Soc., et SS. RR. Lugd. Bat. et Patav. et Lond. et Edinb. et Ins. Feejee. et Null. Terr. et Pekin. Soc. Hon. et S. H. S. et S. P. A. et A. A. S. et S. Humb. Univ. et S. Omn. Rer. Quarund. q. Aliar. Promov. Passamaquod. et H. P. C. et I. O. H. et A. Δ. φ. et II. K. P. et φ. B. K. et Peucin. et Erosoph. et Philadelph. et Frat. in Unit. et Σ. T. et S. Archæolog. Athen. et Acad. Scient. et Lit. Panorm. et SS. R. H. Matrit. et Beeloochist. et Caffrar. et Caribb. et M. S. Reg. Paris. et S. Am. Antiserv. Soc. Hon. et P. D. Gott. et LL. D. 1852, et D. C. L. et Mus. Doc. Oxon. 1860, et M. M. S. S. et M. D. 1854, et Med. Fac. Univ. Harv. Soc. et S. pro Convers. Pollywog. Soc. Hon. et Higgl. Piggl. et LL. B. 1853, et S. pro Christianiz. Moschet. Soc. et SS. Ante-Diluv. ubiq. Gent. Soc. Hon. et Civit. Cleric. Jaalam. et S. pro Diffus. General. Tenebr. Secret. Corr.

## INTRODUCTION.

WHEN, more than three years ago, my talented young parishioner, Mr. Biglow, came to me and submitted to my animadversions the first of his poems which he intended to commit to the more hazardous trial of a city newspaper, it never so much as entered my imagination to conceive that his productions would ever be gathered into a fair volume, and ushered into the august presence of the reading public by myself. So little are we short-sighted mortals able to predict the event! I confess that there is to me a quite new satisfaction in being associated (though only as sleeping partner) in a book which can stand by itself in an independent unity on the shelves of libraries. For there is always this drawback from the pleasure of printing a sermon, that, whereas the queasy stomach of this generation will not bear a discourse long enough to make a separate volume, those religious and godly-minded children (those Samuels, if I may call them so) of the brain must at first lie buried in an undistinguished heap, and then get such resurrection as is vouchsafed to them, mummy-wrapped with a score of others in a cheap binding, with no other mark of distinction than the word "*Miscellaneous*" printed upon the back. Far be it from me to claim any credit for the quite unexpected popularity which I am pleased to find these bucolic strains have attained unto. If I know myself, I am measurably free from the itch of vanity; yet I may be allowed to say that I was not backward to recognize in them a certain wild, puckery, acidulous (sometimes even verging toward that point which, in our rustic phrase, is termed *shut-eye*) flavor, not wholly unpleasing, nor unwholesome, to palates cloyed with the sugariness of tamed and cultivated fruit. It may be, also, that some touches of my own, here and there, may have led to their wider acceptance, albeit solely from my larger experience of literature and authorship.\*

\* The reader curious in such matters may refer (if he can find them) to "A sermon preached on the Anniversary of the Dark Day," "An Artillery Election Sermon," "A

I was, at first, inclined to discourage Mr. Biglow's attempts, as knowing that the desire to poetize is one of the diseases naturally incident to adolescence, which, if the fitting remedies be not at once and with a bold hand applied, may become chronic, and render one, who might else have become in due time an ornament of the social circle, a painful object even to nearest friends and relatives. But thinking, on a further experience, that there was a germ of promise in him which required only culture and the pulling up of weeds from around it, I thought it best to set before him the acknowledged examples of English composition in verse, and leave the rest to natural emulation. With this view, I accordingly lent him some volumes of Pope and Goldsmith, to the assiduous study of which he promised to devote his evenings. Not long afterward, he brought me some verses written upon that model, a specimen of which I subjoin, having changed some phrases of less elegance, and a few rhymes objectionable to the cultivated ear. The poem consisted of childish reminiscences, and the sketches which follow will not seem destitute of truth to those whose fortunate education began in a country village. And, first, let us hang up his charcoal portrait of the school-dame.

"Propped on the marsh, a dwelling now, I see  
The humble school-house of my A, B, C,  
Where well-drilled urchins, each behind his  
tire,  
Waited in ranks the wished command to fire,  
Then all together, when the signal came,  
Discharged their *a-b abs* against the dame.  
Daughter of Danaus, who could daily pour  
In treacherous pipkins her Pierian store,  
She, mid the volleyed learning firm and calm,  
Patted the furloughed ferule on her palm,  
And, to our wonder, could divine at once  
Who flashed the pan, and who was downright  
dunce.

"There young Devotion learned to climb with  
ease  
The gnarly limbs of Scripture family-trees,  
And he was most commended and admired

Discourse on the Late Eclipse," "Dorcas, a  
Funeral Sermon on the Death of Madam Sub-  
mit Tidd, Relict of the late Experience Tidd,  
Esq.," &c., &c.

Who soonest to the topmost twig perspired ;  
Each name was called as many various ways  
As pleased the reader's ear on different days,  
So that the weather, or the ferule's stings,  
Colds in the head, or fifty other things,  
Transformed the helpless Hebrew thrice a  
week

To guttural Pequot or resounding Greek,  
The vibrant accent skipping here and there,  
Just as it pleased invention or despair ;  
No controversial Hebraist was the Dame ;  
With or without the points pleased her the  
same ;

If any tyro found a name too tough,  
And looked at her, pride furnished skill  
enough ;

She nerved her larynx for the desperate thing,  
And cleared the five-barred syllables at a  
spring.

\* Ah, dear old times ! there once it was my  
hap,  
Perched on a stool, to wear the long-eared  
cap ;

From books degraded, there I sat at ease,  
A drone, the envy of compulsory bees ;  
Rewards of merit, too, full many a time,  
Each with its woodcut and its moral rhyme,  
And pierced half-dollars hung on ribbons gay  
About my neck — to be restored next day,  
I carried home, rewards as shining then  
As those which deck the lifelong pains of men,  
More solid than the redemanded praise  
With which the world beribbons later days.

\* Ah, dear old times ! how brightly ye return !  
How, rubbed afresh, your phosphor traces  
burn !

The ramble schoolward through dewsparkling  
meads

The willow-wands turned Cinderella steeds  
The impromptu pinbent hook, the deep re-  
morse

O'er the chance-captured minnow's inchloug  
corse ;

The pockets, plethoric with marbles round,  
That still a space for ball and peggot found,  
Nor satiate yet, could manage to confine  
Horsechestnuts, flagroot, and the kite's  
wound twine,

Nay, like the prophet's carpet could take in,  
Enlarging still, the popgun's magazine ;  
The dinner carried in the small tin pail,  
Shared with some dog, whose most beseech-  
ing tail

And dripping tongue and eager ears belied  
The assumed indifference of canine pride ;  
The caper homeward, shortened if the cart  
Of Neighbor Pomeroy, trundling from the  
mart,

O'ertook me, — then, translated to the seat  
I praised the steed, how stanch he was and  
fleet,

While the bluff farmer, with superior grin,  
Explained where horses should be thick,  
where thin.

And warned me (joke he always had in store)  
To shun a beast that four white stockings  
wore.

What a fine natural courtesy was his !  
His nod was pleasure, and his full bow bliss ;  
How did his well-thumbed hat, with ardor  
rapt,

Its curve decorous to each rank adapt !

How did it graduate with a courtly ease  
The whole long scale of social differences,  
Yet so gave each his measure running o'er,  
None thought his own was less, his neighbor's  
more ;

The squire was flattered, and the pauper knew  
Old times acknowledged 'neath the thread-  
bare blue !

Dropped at the corner of the embowered lane,  
Whistling I wade the knee-deep leaves again,  
While eager Argus, who has missed all day  
The sharer of his condescending play,  
Comes leaping onward with a bark elate  
And boisterous tail to greet me at the gate ;  
That I was true in absence to our love  
Let the thick dog's-ears in my primer prove. "

I add only one further extract, which  
will possess a melancholy interest to all  
such as have endeavored to glean the ma-  
terials of revolutionary history from the  
lips of aged persons, who took a part in  
the actual making of it, and, finding the  
manufacture profitable, continued the sup-  
ply in an adequate proportion to the de-  
mand.

" Old Joe is gone, who saw hot Percy goad  
His slow artillery up the Concord road,  
A tale which grew in wonder, year by year,  
As, every time he told it, Joe drew near  
To the main fight, till, faded and grown gray,  
The original scene to bolder tints gave way ;  
Then Joe had heard the foe's scared double-  
quick

Beat on stove drum with one uncaptured  
stick,

And, ere death came the lengthening tale to  
lop,

Himself had fired, and seen a red-coat drop ;  
Had Joe lived long enough, that scrambling  
fight

Had squared more nearly with his sense of  
right,

And vanquished Percy, to complete the tale,  
Had hammered stone for life in Concord jail. "

I do not know that the foregoing ex-  
tracts ought not to be called my own  
rather than Mr. Biglow's, as, indeed, he  
maintained stoutly that my file had left  
nothing of his in them. I should not,  
perhaps, have felt entitled to take so great  
liberties with them, had I not more than  
suspected an hereditary vein of poetry in  
myself, a very near ancestor having writ-  
ten a Latin poem in the Harvard *Gratula-  
tio* on the accession of George the Third.  
Suffice it to say, that, whether not satis-  
fied with such limited approbation as I  
could conscientiously bestow, or from a  
sense of natural inaptitude, certain it is  
that my young friend could never be in-  
duced to any further essays in this kind.  
He affirmed that it was to him like writ-  
ing in a foreign tongue, — that Mr. Pope's  
versification was like the regular ticking  
of one of Willard's clocks, in which one  
could fancy, after long listening, a certain



kind of rhythm or tune, but which yet was only a poverty-stricken *tick, tick*, after all,—and that he had never seen a sweet-water on a trellis growing so fairly, or in forms so pleasing to his eye, as a fox-grape over a scrub-oak in a swamp. He graded I know not what, to the effect that the sweet-water would only be the more disfigured by having its leaves starched and ironed out, and that Pegasus (so he called him) hardly looked right with his mane and tail in curl-papers. These and other such opinions I did not long strive to eradicate, attributing them rather to a defective education and senses untuned by too long familiarity with purely natural objects, than to a perverted moral sense. I was the more inclined to this leniency since sufficient evidence was not to seek, that his verses, as wanting as they certainly were in classic polish and point, had somehow taken hold of the public ear in a surprising manner. So, only setting him right as to the quantity of the proper name Pegasus, I left him to follow the bent of his natural genius.

Yet could I not surrender him wholly to the tutelage of the pagan (which, literally interpreted, signifies village) muse without yet a further effort for his conversion, and to this end I resolved that whatever of poetic fire yet burned in myself, aided by the assiduous bellows of correct models, should be put in requisition. Accordingly, when my ingenious young parishioner brought to my study a copy of verses which he had written touching the acquisition of territory resulting from the Mexican war, and the folly of leaving the question of slavery or freedom to the adjudication of chance, I did myself indite a short fable or apologue after the manner of Gay and Prior, to the end that he might see how easily even such subjects as he treated of were capable of a more refined style and more elegant expression. Mr. Biglow's production was as follows:—

### THE TWO GUNNERS.

#### A FABLE.

Two fellers, Isrel named and Joe,  
One Sundry mornin' 'greed to go  
Agunnin' soon'z the bells wuz done  
And meetin' finally begun,  
So'st no one would n't be about  
Ther Sabbath-breakin' to spy out.

Joe did n't want to go a mite;  
He felt ez though 't warn't skeercely right,  
But, when his doubts he went to speak on,  
Isrel he up and called him Deacon,  
An' kep' apokin' fun like sin  
An' then arubbin' on it in,  
Till Joe, less skeered o' doin' wrong  
Than bein' laughed at, went along.

Fast noontime they went trampin' round  
An' nary thing to pop at found,  
Till, fairly tired o' their spree,  
They leaned their guns agin a tree,  
An' jest ez they wuz settin' down  
To take their noonin', Joe looked roun'  
And see (acrost lots in a pond  
That warn't mor'n twenty rod beyond),  
A goose that on the water sot  
Ez ef awaitin' to be shot.

Isrel he ups and grabs his gun;  
Sez he, "By ginger, here's some fun!"  
"Don't fire," sez Joe, "it aint no use,  
Thet's Deacon Peleg's tame wil'-goose":  
Says Isrel, "I don't care a cent.  
I've sighted an' I'll let her went";  
Bang! went queen's-arm, ole gander flopped  
His wings a spell, an' quorked, an' dropped.

Sez Joe, "I would n't ha' been hired  
At that poor critter to ha' fired,  
But sence it's clean gin up the ghost,  
We'll hev the tallest kind o' roa-t;  
I guess our waistbands'll be tight  
'Fore it comes ten o'clock ternight."

"I won't agree to no such bender,"  
Sez Isrel; "keep it tell it's tender;  
'T aint wuth a snap afore it's ripe";  
Sez Joe, "I'd jest ez lives eat tripe;  
You air a buster ter suppose  
I'd eat what makes me hol' my nose!"

So they disputed to an' fro  
Till cunnin' Isrel sez to Joe,  
"Don't le's stay here an' play the fool,  
Le's wait till both on us git cool,  
Jest for a day or two le's hide it,  
An' then toss up an' so decide it."  
"Agreed!" sez Joe, an' so they did,  
An' the ole goose wuz safely hid.

Now 't wuz the hottest kind o' weather,  
An' when at last they come together,  
It did n't signify hed won,  
Fer all the mischief which ben done:  
The goose wuz there, but, fer his soul,  
Joe would n't ha' tetcht it with a pole;  
But Isrel kind o' liked the smell on 't  
An' made his dinner very well on 't.

My own humble attempt was in manner  
and form following, and I print it here, I  
sincerely trust, out of no vainglory, but  
solely with the hope of doing good.

### LEAVING THE MATTER OPEN.

#### A TALE.

BY HOMER WILBUR, A. M.

Two brothers once, an ill-matched pair,  
Together dwelt (no matter where),  
To whom an Uncle Sam, or some one,  
Had left a house and farm in common.  
The two in principles and habits  
Were different as rats from rabbits;  
Stout Farmer North, with frugal care,  
Laid up provision for his heir,  
Not scorning with hard sun-browned hands  
To scrape acquaintance with his lands;

Whatever thing he had to do  
He did, and made it pay him, too ;  
He sold his waste stone by the pound,  
His drains made water-wheels spin round,  
His ice in summer-time he sold,  
His wood brought profit when 't was cold,  
He dug and delved from morn till night,  
Strove to make profit square with right,  
Lived on his means, cut no great dash,  
And paid his debts in honest cash.

On tother hand, his brother South  
Lived very much from hand to mouth,  
Played gentleman, nursed dainty hands,  
Borrowed North's money on his lands,  
And culled his morals and his graces  
From cock-pits, bar-rooms, fights, and races ;  
His sole work in the farming line  
Was keeping droves of long-legged swine,  
Which brought great bothers and expenses  
To North in looking after fences,  
And, when they happened to break through,  
Cost him both time and temper too,  
For South insisted it was plain  
He ought to drive them home again,  
And North consented to the work  
Because he loved to buy cheap pork.

Meanwhile, South's swine increasing fast,  
His farm became too small at last ;  
So, having thought the matter over,  
And feeling bound to live in clover  
And never pay the clover's worth,  
He said one day to Brother North : —

"Our families are both increasing,  
And, though we labor without ceasing,  
Our produce soon will be too scant  
To keep our children out of want ;  
They who wish fortune to be lasting  
Must be both prudent and forecasting ;  
We soon shall need more land ; a lot  
I know, that cheaply can be bot' ;  
You lend the cash, I'll buy the acres,  
And we'll be equally partakers."

Poor North, whose Anglo-Saxon blood  
Gave him a hankering after mud,  
Wavered a moment, then consented,  
And, when the cash was paid, repented ;  
To make the new land worth a pin,  
Thought he, it must be all fenced in,  
For, if South's swine once get the run on 't  
No kind of farming can be done on 't ;  
If that don't suit the other side,  
'T is best we instantly divide.

But somehow South could ne'er incline  
This way or that to run the line,  
And always found some new pretence  
'Gainst setting the division fence ;  
At last he said : —

"For peace's sake,  
Liberal concessions I will make ;  
Though I believe, upon my soul,  
I've a just title to the whole,  
I'll make an offer which I call  
Generous, — we'll have no fence at all ;  
Then both of us, whene'er we choose,  
Can take what part we want to use ;  
If you should chance to need it first,  
Pick you the best, I'll take the worst."

"Agreed !" cried North ; thought he, This fall  
With wheat and rye I'll sow it all ;  
In that way I shall get the start,  
And South may whistle for his part.  
So thought, so done, the field was sown,  
And, winter having come and gone,  
Sly North walked blithely forth to spy,  
The progress of his wheat and rye ;  
Heavens, what a sight ! his brother's swine  
Had asked themselves all out to dine ;  
Such grunting, munching, rooting, shoving,  
The soil seemed all alive and moving,  
As for his grain, such work they'd made on 't,  
He could n't spy a single blade on 't.

Off in a rage he rushed to South,  
"My wheat and rye" — grief choked his  
mouth ;

"Pray don't mind me," said South, "but plant  
All of the new land that you want" ;  
"Yes, but your hogs," cried North ;

"The grain  
Won't hurt them," answered South again ;  
"But they destroy my crop" ;

"No doubt ;  
'T is fortunate you've found it out ;  
Misfortunes teach, and only they,  
You must not sow it in their way" ;  
"Nay, you," says North, "must keep them  
out" ;

"Did I create them with a snout ?"  
Asked South demurely ; "as agreed,  
The land is open to your seed,  
And would you fain prevent my pigs  
From running there their harmless rigs?  
God knows I view this compromise  
With not the most approving eyes ;  
I gave up my unquestioned rights  
For sake of quiet days and nights ;  
I offered then, you know 't is true,  
To cut the piece of land in two."  
"Then cut it now," growls North ;

"Abate  
Your heat," says South, "'t is now too late ;  
I offered you the rocky corner,  
But you, of your own good the scorned,  
Refused to take it ; I am sorry ;  
No doubt you might have found a quarry,  
Perhaps a gold-mine, for aught I know,  
Containing heaps of native rhine ;  
You can't expect me to resign  
My rights" —

"But where," quoth North, "are mine ?"  
"Your rights," says tother, "well, that's funny,  
I bought the land" —

"I paid the money" ;  
"That," answered South, "is from the point,  
The ownership, you'll grant, is joint ;  
I'm sure my only hope and trust is  
Not law so much as abstract justice,  
Though, you remember, 't was agreed  
That so and so — consult the deed ;  
Objections now are out of date,  
They might have answered once, but Fate  
Quashes them at the point we've got to ;  
*Obsta principis*, that's my motto."  
So saying, South began to whistle  
And looked as obstinate as gristle,  
While North went homeward, each brown paw  
Clenched like a knot of natural law,  
And all the while, in either ear,  
Heard something clicking wondrous clear.

To turn now to other matters, there are two things upon which it would seem fitting to dilate somewhat more largely in this place, — the Yankee character and the Yankee dialect. And, first, of the Yankee character, which has wanted neither open maligners, nor even more dangerous enemies in the persons of those unskilful painters who have given to it that hardness, angularity, and want of proper perspective, which, in truth, belonged, not to their subject, but to their own niggard and unskilful pencil.

New England was not so much the colony of a mother country, as a Hagar driven forth into the wilderness. The little self-exiled band which came hither in 1620 came, not to seek gold, but to found a democracy. They came that they might have the privilege to work and pray, to sit upon hard benches and listen to painful preachers as long as they would, yea, even unto thirty-seventhly, if the spirit so willed it. And surely, if the Greek might boast his Thermopylæ, where three hundred men fell in resisting the Persian, we may well be proud of our Plymouth Rock, where a handful of men, women, and children not merely faced, but vanquished, winter, famine, the wilderness, and the yet more invincible *storge* that drew them back to the green island far away. These found no lotus growing upon the surly shore, the taste of which could make them forget their little native Ithaca; nor were they so wanting to themselves in faith as to burn their ship, but could see the fair west-wind belly the homeward sail, and then turn unrepining to grapple with the terrible Unknown.

As Want was the prime foe these hardy exodists had to fortress themselves against, so it is little wonder if that traditional feud is long in wearing out of the stock. The wounds of the old warfare were long a-healing, and an east-wind of hard times puts a new ache into every one of them. Thrift was the first lesson in their horn-book, pointed out, letter after letter, by the lean finger of the hard schoolmistress, Necessity. Neither were those plump, rosy-gilled Englishmen that came hither, but a hard-faced, atrabilious, earnest-eyed race, stiff from long wrestling with the Lord in prayer, and who had taught Satan to tread the new Puritan hug. Add two hundred years' influence of soil, climate, and exposure, with its necessary result of iliosyncrasies, and we have the present Yankee, full of expedients, half-master of all trades, inventive in all but the beautiful, full of shifts, not yet capable of comfort, armed at all points against the old

enemy Hunger, longanimous, good at patching, not so careful for what is best as for what will *do*, with a clasp to his purse and a button to his pocket, not skilled to build against Time, as in old countries, but against sore-pressing Need, accustomed to move the world with no *πῶς οὐδὲν* but his own two feet, and no lever but his own long forecast. A strange hybrid, indeed, did circumstance beget, here in the New World, upon the old Puritan stock, and the earth never before saw such mystic-practicalism, such niggard-geniality, such calculating-fanaticism, such cast-iron-enthusiasm, such sour-faced-humor, such close-fisted-generosity. This new *Græculus esuriens* will make a living out of anything. He will invent new trades as well as tools. His brain is his capital, and he will get education at all risks. Put him on Juan Fernandez, and he would make a spelling-book first, and a salt-pan afterward. *In cœlum, jussuris, ibil*, — or the other way either, — it is all one, so anything is to be got by it. Yet, after all, thin, speculative Jonathan is more like the Englishman of two centuries ago than John Bull himself is. He has lost somewhat in solidity, has become fluent and adaptable, but more of the original groundwork of character remains. He feels more at home with Fulke Greville, Herbert of Cherbury, Quarles, George Herbert, and Browne, than with his modern English cousins. He is nearer than John, by at least a hundred years, to Naseby, Marston Moor, Worcester, and the time when, if ever, there were true Englishmen. John Bull has suffered the idea of the Invisible to be very much fattened out of him. Jonathan is conscious still that he lives in the world of the Unseen as well as of the Seen. To move John you must make your fulcrum of solid beef and pudding; an abstract idea will do for Jonathan.

#### \*• TO THE INDULGENT READER.

My friend, the Rev. Mr. Wilbur, having been seized with a dangerous fit of illness, before this Introduction had passed through the press, and being incapacitated for all literary exertion, sent to me his notes, memoranda, &c., and requested me to fashion them into some shape more fitting for the general eye. This, owing to the fragmentary and disjointed state of his manuscripts, I have felt wholly unable to do; yet, being unwilling that the reader should be deprived of such parts of his lucubrations as seemed more finished, and not well discerning how to segregate these from the rest, I have concluded to send them all to the press precisely as they are. COLUMBUS NVE.

Pastor of a Church in Bungtown Corner.



It remains to speak of the Yankee dialect. And, first, it may be premised, in a general way, that any one much read in the writings of the early colonists need not be told that the far greater share of the words and phrases now esteemed peculiar to New England, and local there, were brought from the mother country. A person familiar with the dialect of certain portions of Massachusetts will not fail to recognize, in ordinary discourse, many words now noted in English vocabularies as archaic, the greater part of which were in common use about the time of the King James translation of the Bible. Shakespeare stands less in need of a glossary to most New-Englanders than to many a native of the Old Country. The peculiarities of our speech, however, are rapidly wearing out. As there is no country where reading is so universal and newspapers are so multitudinous, so no phrase remains long local, but is transplanted in the mail-bags to every remotest corner of the land. Consequently our dialect approaches nearer to uniformity than that of any other nation.

The English have complained of us for coining new words. Many of those so stigmatized were old ones by them forgotten, and all make now an unquestioned part of the currency, wherever English is spoken. Undoubtedly, we have a right to make new words, as they are needed by the fresh aspects under which life presents itself here in the New World; and, indeed, wherever a language is alive, it grows. It might be questioned whether we could not establish a stronger title to the ownership of the English tongue than the mother-landers themselves. Here, past all question, is to be its great home and centre. And not only is it already spoken here by greater numbers, but with a far higher popular average of correctness than in Britain. The great writers of it, too, we might claim as ours, were ownership to be settled by the number of readers and lovers.

As regards the provincialisms to be met with in this volume, I may say that the reader will not find one which is not (as I believe) either native or imported with the early settlers, nor one which I have not, with my own ears, heard in familiar use. In the metrical portion of the book, I have endeavored to adapt the spelling as nearly as possible to the ordinary mode of pronunciation. Let the reader who deems me over-particular remember this caution of Martial:—

“*Quem recitas, meus est, O Fidentine, libellus;  
Sed male cum recitas, incipit esse tuus.*”

A few further explanatory remarks will not be impertinent.

I shall barely lay down a few general rules for the reader's guidance.

1. The genuine Yankee never gives the rough sound to the *r* when he can help it, and often displays considerable ingenuity in avoiding it even before a vowel.

2. He seldom sounds the final *g*, a piece of self-denial, if we consider his partiality for nasals. The same of the final *d*, as *han'* and *stan'* for *hand* and *stand*.

3. The *h* in such words as *while*, *when*, *where*, he omits altogether.

4. In regard to *a*, he shows some inconsistency, sometimes giving a close and obscure sound, as *hev* for *have*, *hendy* for *handy*, *ez* for *as*, *thet* for *that*, and again giving it the broad sound it has in *father*, as *hânsome* for *handsome*.

5. To the sound *ou* he prefixes an *e* (hard to exemplify otherwise than orally).

The following passage in Shakespeare he would recite thus:—

“*Neow is the winta uv eour discontent  
Med glorious summa by this sun o' Yock,  
An' all the cleouds thet leowered upun eour  
heouse*

*In the deep buzzum o' the oshin buried;  
Neow air eour brews beound 'ith victorious  
wreaths;*

*Eour breused arms hung up fer monimunce;  
Eour starn alarums changed to merry meetins,  
Eour drefle marches to delighfle masures.  
Grim-visagedwar heth smeuthed his wrinkled  
front,*

*An' neow, instid o' mounin' barebid steeds  
To fright the souls o' ferfle edverseries,  
He capers nimly in a lady's chámber,  
To the lascivious pleasin' uv a loot.”*

6. *Au*, in such words as *daughter* and *slaughter*, he pronounces *ah*.

7. To the dish thus seasoned add a drawl *ad libitum*.

[Mr. Wilbur's notes here become entirely fragmentary. — C. N.]

a. Unable to procure a likeness of Mr. Biglow, I thought the curious reader might be gratified with a sight of the editorial effigies. And here a choice between two was offered, — the one a profile (entirely black) cut by Doyle, the other a portrait painted by a native artist of much promise. The first of these seemed wanting in expression, and in the second a slight obliquity of the visual organs has been heightened (perhaps from an over-desire of force on the part of the artist) into too close an approach to actual *strabismus*. This slight divergence in my optical apparatus from the ordinary model — however I may have

been taught to regard it in the light of a mercy rather than a cross, since it enabled me to give as much of directness and personal application to my discourses as met the wants of my congregation, without risk of offending any by being supposed to have him or her in my eye (as the saying is)—seemed yet to Mrs. Wilbur a sufficient objection to the engraving of the aforesaid painting. We read of many who either absolutely refused to allow the copying of their features, as especially did Plotinus and Agesilaus among the ancients, not to mention the more modern instances of Scioppius, Palæottus, Pinellus, Velsenus, Gataker, and others, or were indifferent thereto, as Cromwell.

β. Yet was Cæsar desirous of concealing his baldness. *Per contra*, my Lord Protector's carefulness in the matter of his wart might be cited. Men generally more desirous of being *improved* in their portraits than characters. Shall probably find very unflattered likenesses of ourselves in Recording Angel's gallery.

γ. Whether any of our national peculiarities may be traced to our use of stoves, as a certain closeness of the lips in pronunciation, and a smothered smoulderingness of disposition seldom roused to open flame? An unrestrained intercourse with fire probably conducive to generosity and hospitality of soul. Ancient Mexicans used stoves, as the friar Augustin Ruiz reports, Hakluyt, III. 468, — but Popish priests not always reliable authority.

To-day picked my Isabella grapes. Crop injured by attacks of rose-bug in the spring. Whether Noah was justifiable in preserving this class of insects?

δ. Concerning Mr. Biglow's pedigree. Tolerably certain that there was never a poet among his ancestors. An ordination hymn attributed to a maternal uncle, but perhaps a sort of production not demanding the creative faculty.

His grandfather a painter of the grandiose or Michael Angelo school. Seldom painted objects smaller than houses or barns, and these with uncommon expression.

ε. Of the Wilburs no complete pedigree. The crest said to be a *wild boar*, whence, perhaps, the name. (?) A connection with the Earls of Wilbraham (*quasi* wild boar ham) might be made out. This suggestion worth following up. In 1677, John W. m. Expect —, had issue, 1. John, 2. Hag-gai, 3. Expect, 4. Ruhamah, 5. Desire.

"Hear lyes ye bodye of Mrs Expect Wilber,  
Ye crewell salvages they kil'd her  
Together wth other Christian soles eleaven,  
October ye ix daye, 1707.

Ye stream of Jordan sh' as crost ore  
And now expects me on ye other shore :  
I live in hope her soon to join ;  
Her earthly yeeres were forty and nine."

*From Gravestone in Pekussett, North Parish.*

This is unquestionably the same John who afterward (1711) married Tabitha Hagg or Ragg.

But if this were the case, she seems to have died early ; for only three years after, namely, 1714, we have evidence that he married Winifred, daughter of Lieutenant Tipping.

He seems to have been a man of substance, for we find him in 1696 conveying "one undivided eightieth part of a salt-meadow" in Yabbok, and he commanded a sloop in 1702.

Those who doubt the importance of genealogical studies *fuste potius quam argumento erudiendi*.

I trace him as far as 1723, and there lose him. In that year he was chosen selectman.

No gravestone. Perhaps overthrown when new hearse-house was built, 1802.

He was probably the son of John, who came from Bilham Comit. Salop. circa 1642.

This first John was a man of considerable importance, being twice mentioned with the honorable prefix of *Mr.* in the town records. Name spelt with two *l*-s.

"Hear lyeth ye bod [stone unhappily broken.]  
Mr. Ihon Willber [Eq.] [I inclose this in  
brackets as doubtful. To me it seems clear.]  
Ob't die [illegible ; looks like xviii.] . . . .  
iii [prob. 1693.]

. . . . . paynt  
. . . . . deseased seinte :  
A friend and [fath]er untoe all ye oprest,  
Hee gave ye wicked familists noe reast,  
When Sat [an bl]ewe his Antinomian blaste,  
Wee clong to [Willber as a stead]fast maste.  
[A] gaynst ye horrid Qua[kers] . . . . "

It is greatly to be lamented that this curious epitaph is mutilated. It is said that the sacrilegious British soldiers made a target of this stone during the war of Independence. How odious an animosity which pauses not at the grave! How brutal that which spares not the monuments of authentic history! This is not improbably from the pen of Rev. Moody Pyram, who is mentioned by Hubbard as having been noted for a silver vein of poetry. If his papers be still extant, a copy might possibly be recovered.

# THE BIGLOW PAPERS.

No. I.

## A LETTER

FROM MR. EZEKIEL BIGLOW OF JAALAM TO THE HON. JOSEPH T. BUCKINGHAM, EDITOR OF THE BOSTON COURIER, INCLOSING A POEM OF HIS SON, MR. HOSEA BIGLOW.

JAYLEM, June 1846.

MISTER EDDYTER:—Our Hosea wuz down to Boston last week, and he see a cruetin Sarjunt a struttin round as popler as a hen with 1 chicking, with 2 fellers a drummin and fiftin arter him like all nater. the sarjunt he thout Hosea hed n't gut his i teeth cut cos he looked a kindo's though he'd jest com down, so he cal'lated to hook him in, but Hosity wood n't take none o' his sarse for all he hed much as 20 Rooster's tales stuck onto his hat and eenamost enuf brass a bobbin up and down on his shoulders and figureed onto his coat and trousis, let alone wut nater hed sot in his featers, to make a 6 pounder out on.

wal, Hosea he com home considerabal riled, and arter I'd gone to bed I heern Him a thrashin round like a short-tailed Bull in fi-time. The old Woman ses she to me ses she, Zekle, ses she, our Hoseo's gut the chollery or suthin anuther ses she, don't you Bee skeered, ses I, he's oney amakin pottery\* ses i, he's ollers on hand at that ere busynes like Da & martin, and shure enuf, cum mornin, Hosity he cum down stares full chizzle, hare on eend and cote tales flyin, and sot rite of to go reed his varses to Parson Wilbur bein he haint aney grate shows o' book larnin himself, bimeby he cum back and sed the parson wuz drefle tickled with 'em as i hoop you will Be, and said they wuz True grit.

Hosea ses taint hardly fair to call 'em bisn now, cos the parson kind o' slicked off sum o' the last varses, but he told

\* *Aut insanit, aut versus facit.* — H. W.

Hosee he did n't want to put his ore in to tetch to the Rest on 'em, bein they wuz verry well As thay wuz, and then Hosity ses he sed suthin a nuther about Simplex Mundishes or sum sech feller, but I guess Hosea kind o' did n't hear him, for I never hearn o' nobody o' that name in this vil-ladge, and I've lived here man and boy 76 year cum next tater diggin, and thair aint no wheres a kitting spryer 'n I be.

If you print 'em I wish you'd jest let folks know who hosity's father is, cos my ant Keziah used to say it's nater to be curus ses she, she aint livin though and he's a likely kind o' lad.

EZEKIEL BIGLOW.

THRASH away, you 'll hev to rattle  
On them kittle-drums o' yourn, —  
'Taint a knowin' kind o' cattle  
That is ketched with mouldy corn;  
Put in stiff, you fifer feller,  
Let folks see how spry you be, —  
Guess you 'll toot till you are yellin  
'Fore you git ahold o' me!

Thet air flag 's a leetle rotten,  
Hope it aint your Sunday's best; —  
Fact! it takes a sight o' cotton  
To stuff out a soger's chest:  
Sence we farmers hev to pay fer 't,  
Ef you must wear humps like these,  
Sposin' you should try salt hay fer 't,  
It would du ez slick ez grease.

'T would n't suit them Southun fellers,  
They 're a drefle graspin' set,  
We must ollers blow the bellers  
Wen they want their irons het;  
May be it 's all right ez preachin',  
But my narves it kind o' grates,  
Wen I see the overreachin'  
O' them nigger-drivin' States.



Them that rule us, them slave-traders,  
Haint they cut a thunderin' swarth  
(Helped by Yankee renegaders),  
Thru the vartu o' the North!  
We begin to think it 's nater  
To take sarse an' not be riled;—  
Who 'd expect to see a tater  
All on eend at bein' biled?

Ez fer war, I call it murder,—  
There you hev it plain an' flat;  
I don't want to go no furder  
Than my Testymnt fer that;  
God hez sed so plump an' fairly,  
It 's ez long ez it is broad,  
An' you 've gut to git up airly  
Ef you want to take in God.

'Taint your eppyletts an' feathers  
Make the thing a grain more right;  
'Taint afollerin' your bell-wethers  
Will excuse ye in His sight;  
Ef you take a sword an' dror it,  
An' go stick a feller thru,  
Guv'ment aint to answer for it,  
God 'll send the bill to you.

Wut 's the use o' meetin'-goin'  
Every Sabbath, wet or dry,  
Ef it 's right to go amowin'  
Feller-men like oats an' rye?  
I dunno but wut it 's pooty  
Trainin' round in bobtail coats,—  
But it 's curus Christian dooty  
This 'ere cuttin' folks's throats.

They may talk o' Freedom's airy  
Tell they 're pupple in the face,—  
It 's a grand gret cemetary  
Fer the barthrights of our race;  
They jest want this Californy  
So 's to lug new slave-states in  
To abuse ye, an' to scorn ye,  
An' to plunder ye like sin.

Aint it cute to see a Yankee  
Take sech everlastin' pains,  
All to git the Devil's thankee  
Helpin' on 'em weld their chains?  
Wy, it 's jest ez clear ez figgers,  
Clear ez one an' one make two,  
Chaps that make black slaves o' niggers  
Want to make wite slaves o' you.

Tell ye jest the eend I 've come to  
Arter cipherin' plaguy smart,  
An' it makes a handy sum, tu,  
Any gump could larn by heart;

Laborin' man an' laborin' woman  
Hev one glory an' one shame.  
Ev'y thin' thet 's done inhuman  
Injers all on 'em the same.

'Taint by turnin' out to hack folks  
You 're agoin' to git your right,  
Nor by lookin' down on black folks  
Coz you 're put upon by wite;  
Slavery aint o' nary color,  
'Taint the hide thet makes it wua,  
All it keers fer in a feller  
'S jest to make him fill its pus.

Want to tackle *me* in, du ye?  
I expect you 'll hev to wait;  
Wen cold lead puts daylight thru ye  
You 'll begin to kal'late;  
S'pose the crows wun't fall to pickin'  
All the carkiss from your bones,  
Coz you helped to give a lickin'  
To them poor half-Spanish drones!

Jest go home an' ask our Nancy  
Wether I 'd be sech a goose  
Ez to jine ye,—guess you 'd fancy  
The eternal bung wuz loose!  
She wants me fer home consumption,  
Let alone the hay 's to mow,—  
Ef you 're arter folks o' gumption,  
You 've a darned long row to hoe.

Take them editors thet 's crowin'  
Like a cockerel three months old,—  
Don't ketch any on 'em goin',  
Though they *be* so blasted bold;  
*Aint* they a prime lot o' fellers?  
'Fore they think on 't guess they 'l  
sprout  
(Like a peach thet 's got the yellers),  
With the meanness bustin' out.

Wal, go 'long to help 'em stealin'  
Bigger pens to cram with slaves,  
Help the men thet 's ollers dealin'  
Insults on your fathers' graves;  
Help the strong to grind the feeble,  
Help the many agin the few,  
Help the men thet call your people  
Witewashed slaves an' peddlin' crew!

Massachusetts, God forgive her,  
She 's akneelin' with the rest,  
She, thet ough' to ha' elung ferever  
In her grand old eagle-nest;  
She thet ough' to stand so fearless  
Wile the wracks are round her hurled,  
Holdin' up a beacon peerless  
To the oppressed of all the world!

Ha'n't they sold your colored seamen?  
 Ha'n't they made your env'ys w'iz?  
*Wut 'll make ye act like freemen?*  
*Wut 'll git your dander riz?*  
 Come, I 'll tell ye wut I 'm thinkin'  
 Is our dooty in this fix,  
 They 'd ha' done 't ez quick ez winkin'  
 In the days o' seventy-six.

Clang the bells in every steeple,  
 Call all true men to disown  
 The tradoochers of our people,  
 The enslavers o' their own;  
 Let our dear old Bay State proudly  
 Put the trumpet to her mouth,  
 Let her ring this messidge loudly  
 In the ears of all the South:—

“I 'll return ye good fer evil  
 Much ez we frail mortils can,  
 But I wun't go help the Devil  
 Makin' man the cus o' man;  
 Call me coward, call me traiter,  
 Jest ez suits your mean ideas,—  
 Here I stand a tyrant-hater,  
 An' the friend o' God an' Peace!”

Ef I 'd *my* way I hed ruther  
 We should go to work an' part,—  
 They take one way, we take t' other,—  
 Guess it would n't break my heart;  
 Man hed oug'w' to put asunder  
 Them thut God has noways jined;  
 An' I should n't gretly wonder  
 Ef there 's thousands o' my mind.

[The first recruiting sergeant on record I conceive to have been that individual who is mentioned in the Book of Job as *going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it*. Bishop Latimer will have him to have been a bishop, but to me that other calling would appear more congenial. The sect of Cainites is not yet extinct, who esteemed the first-born of Adam to be the most worthy, not only because of that privilege of primogeniture, but inasmuch as he was able to overcome and slay his younger brother. That was a wise saying of the famous Marquis Pescara to the Papal Legato, that *it was impossible for men to serve Mars and Christ at the same time*. Yet in time past the profession of arms was judged to be κατ' ἐξοχήν that of a gentleman, nor does this opinion want for strenuous upholders even in our day. Must we suppose, then, that the profession of Christianity was only intended for losels, or, at best, to afford an opening for plebeian ambition? Or shall we hold with that nicely metaphysical Pomeranian, Captain Vratz, who was Count Königsmark's chief instrument in the murder of Mr. Thynne, that the Scheme of Salvation has been arranged with an especial eye to the necessities of the upper classes, and that “God would consider a gentleman and

deal with him suitably to the condition and profession he had placed him in”? It may be said of us all, *Exemplo plus quam ratione vivimus*. — H. W.]

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 No. II.

## A LETTER

FROM MR. HOSEA BIGLOW TO THE HON.  
 J. T. BUCKINGHAM, EDITOR OF THE BOS-  
 TON COURIER, COVERING A LETTER FROM  
 MR. B. SAWIN, PRIVATE IN THE MASSA-  
 CHUSETTS REGIMENT.

[This letter of Mr. Sawin's was not originally written in verse. Mr. Biglow, thinking it peculiarly susceptible of metrical adornment, translated it, so to speak, into his own vernacular tongue. This is not the time to consider the question, whether rhyme be a mode of expression natural to the human race. If leisure from other and more important avocations be granted, I will handle the matter more at large in an appendix to the present volume. In this place I will barely remark, that I have sometimes noticed in the unlanguage prattlings of infants a fondness for alliteration, assonance, and even rhyme, in which natural predisposition we may trace the three degrees through which our Angle-Saxon verse rose to its culmination in the poetry of Pope. I would not be understood as questioning in these remarks that pious theory which supposes that children, if left entirely to themselves, would naturally discourse in Hebrew. For this the authority of one experiment is claimed, and I could, with Sir Thomas Browne, desire its establishment, inasmuch as the acquirement of that sacred tongue would thereby be facilitated. I am aware that Herodotus states the conclusion of Psammeticus to have been in favor of a dialect of the Phrygian. But, beside the chance that a trial of this importance would hardly be blessed to a Pagan monarch whose only motive was curiosity, we have on the Hebrew side the comparatively recent investigation of James the Fourth of Scotland. I will add to this prefatory remark, that Mr. Sawin, though a native of Jaalam, has never been a stated attendant on the religious exercises of my congregation. I consider my humble efforts prospered in that not one of my sheep hath ever induced the wolf's clothing of war, save for the comparatively innocent diversion of a militia training. Not that my flock are backward to undergo the hardships of *defensive* warfare. They serve cheerfully in the great army which fights even unto death *pro aris et focis*, accoutred with the spade, the axe, the plane, the sledge, the spelling-book, and other such effectual weapons against want and ignorance and unthrift. I have taught them (under God) to esteem our human institutions as but tents of a night, to be stricken whenever Truth puts the bugle to her lips and sounds a march to the heights of wider-viewed intelligence and more perfect organization. — H. W.]

MISTER BUCKINUM, the follerin Billet was writ hum by a Yung feller of our town that wuz cussed fool enuff to goe atrottin inter Miss Chiff arter a Drum and fife. it ain't Nater for a feller to let on that he 's sick o' any bizness that He went intu off his own free will and a Cord, but I rather callate he 's middlin tired o' voluntearin By this Time. I bleeve u may put dependents on his statemence. For I never heered nothin bad on him let Alone his havin what Parson Wilbur cal's a *pong shong* for cocktales, and he ses it wuz a soshiashun of idees sot him agoin arter the Crootin Sargient cos he wore a cocktale onto his hat.

his Folks gin the letter to me and i shew it to parson Wilbur and he ses it oughter Bee printed. send It to mister Buckinum, ses he, i don't ollers agree with him, ses he, but by Time,\* ses he, I *du* like a feller that aint a Feared.

I have intuspuessed a Few refleckshuns hear and thair. We 're kind o' prest with Hayin.

Ewers respectfly  
HOSEA BIGLOW.

THIS kind o' sogerin' aint a mite like our October trainin',  
A chap could clear right out from there ef 't only looked like rainin',  
An' th' Cunnles, tu, could kiver up their shappoes with bandanners,  
An' send the insines skootin' to the bar-room with their banners  
(Fear o' gittin' on 'em spotted), an' a feller could cry quarter  
Ef he fired away his ramrod arter tu much rum an' water.  
Recollect wut fun we hed, you'n I an' Ezry Hollis,  
Up there to Waltham plain last fall, along o' the Cornwallis †  
This sort o' thing aint *jest* like thet, — I wish thet I wuz furdur, — ‡  
Nimepunce a day fer killin' folks comes kind o' low fer murder,

\* In relation to this expression, I cannot but think that Mr. Biglow has been too hasty in attributing it to me. Though Time be a comparatively innocent personage to swear by, and though Longinus in his discourse Περὶ Ὑψους have commended timely oaths as not only a useful but sublime figure of speech, yet I have always kept my lips free from that abomination. *Odi profanum vulgus*, I hate your swearing and hectoring fellows. — H. W.

† I hait the Site of a feller with a muskit as I du pizn But their *is* fun to a cornwallis I aint agoin' to deny it. — H. B.

‡ he means Not quite so fur I guess. — H. B.

(Wy I 've worked out to slarterin' some fer Deacon Cephas Billins,  
An' in the hardest times there wuz I ollers tetchen ten shillins,)

There 's sutthin' gits into my throat thet makes it hard to swaller,

It comes so nateral to think about a hempen collar;

It 's glory, — but, in spite o' all my tryin' to git callous,

I feel a kind o' in a cart, aridin' to the gallus.

But wen it comes to *bein'* killed, — I tell ye I felt streaked

The fast time 't ever I found out wy baggonets wuz peaked;

Here 's how it wuz: I started out to go to a fandango,

The sentinul he ups an' sez, "Thet 's furdur 'an you can go."

"None o' your sarse," sez I; sez he, "Stan' back!" "Aint you a buster?"

Sez I, "I 'm up to all thet air, I guess I 've ben to muster;

I know wy sentinuls air sot; you aint agoin' to eat us;

Caleb haint no monopoly to court the seenoreetas;

My folks to hum air full ez good ez hisn be, by golly!"

An' so ez I wuz goin' by, not thinkin' wut would folly,

The everlastin' cus he stuck his one-pronged pitchfork in me

An' made a hole right thru my close ez ef I wuz an in my.

Wal, it beats all how big I felt hoorawin' in ole Funnel

Wen Mister Bolles he gin the sword to our Leftenant Cunnle,

(It 's Mister Secondary Bolles,\* thet writ the prize peace essay;

Thet 's why he did n't list himself along o' us, I dessay,)

An' Rantoul, tu, talked pooty loud, but don't put *his* foot in it,

Coz human life 's so sacred thet he 's principled agin it, —

Though I myself can't rightly see it 's any wuz achokin' on 'em,

Than puttin' bullets thru their lights, or with a bagnet pokin' on 'em;

\* the ignerant creeter means Sekketary; but he ollers stuck to his books like cobbler's wax to an ile-stonc. — H. B.



How drefle slick he reeled it off (like  
Blitz at our lyceum  
Ahaulin' ribbins from his chops so quick  
you skeercely see 'em),  
About the Anglo-Saxon race (an' saxons  
would be handy  
To du the buryin' down here upon the  
Rio Grandy),  
About our patriotic pas an' our star-  
spangled banner,  
Our country's bird alookin' on an' sing-  
in' out hosanner,  
An' how he (Mister B. himself) wuz  
happy fer Ameriky,—  
I felt, ez sister Patience sez, a leetle mite  
histericky.  
I felt, I swon, ez though it wuz a drefle  
kind o' privilege  
Atrampin' round thru Boston streets  
among the gutter's drivelage;  
I act'ly thought it wuz a treat to hear  
a little drummin',  
An' it did bonyfidy seem millanyum wuz  
acomin'  
Wen all on us got suits (darned like  
them wore in the state prison)  
An' every feller felt ez though all Mexico  
wuz hisn.\*

This 'ere 's about the meanest place a  
skunk could wal diskiver  
(Saltillo's Mexican, I b'lieve, fer wut we  
call Salt-river);  
The sort o' trash a feller gits to eat doos  
beat all nater,  
I 'd give a year's pay fer a smell o' one  
good blue-nose tater;  
The country here thet Mister Bolles de-  
clared to be so charmin'  
Throughout is swarmin' with the most  
alarmin' kind o' varmin'.

He talked about delishis froot, but then  
it wuz a wopper all,  
The holl on 't 's mud an' prickly pears,  
with here an' there a chapparal;  
You see a feller peekin' out, an', fust you  
know, a lariat

\* it must be aloud that there's a streak of  
nater in lovin' sho, but it sartintly is 1 of the  
curusest things in nater to see a rispecktable  
dri goods dealer (deekon off a chutch mayby)  
a riggin' himself out in the Weigh they du and  
struttin' round in the Reign aspitin' his trowis  
and makin' wet goods of himself. Ef any thin's  
foolisher and moor dieklus than militerry glo-  
ary it is milishy gloary. — H. B.

Is round your throat an' you a copse, 'fore  
you can say, "Wut air ye at?"\*  
You never see sech darned gret bugs (it  
may not be irrelevant  
To say I 've seen a *scarabeus pilularius*†  
big ez a year old elephant),  
The rigitment come up one day in time  
to stop a red bug  
From runnin' off with Cunnle Wright,  
— 't wuz jest a common *cimez lec-  
tularius*.

One night I started up on eend an'  
thought I wuz to hum agin,  
I heern a horn, thinks I it 's Sol the  
fisherman hez come agin,  
*His* bellowses is sound enough, — ez I 'm  
a livin' creeter,  
I felt a thing go thru my leg, — 't wuz  
nothin' more 'n a skeeter!  
Then there 's the yaller fever, tu, they  
call it here el vomito, —  
(Come, thet wun't du, you landcrab  
there, I tell ye to le' go my toe!  
My gracious! it 's a scorpion thet 's took  
a shine to play with 't,  
I darsn't skeer the tarnal thing fer fear  
he 'd run away with 't.)  
Afore I come away from hum I hed a  
strong persuasion  
Thet Mexicans worn't human beans, ‡  
— an ourang outang nation,  
A sort o' folks a chap could kill an'  
never dream on 't arter,  
No more 'n a feller 'd dream o' pigs thet  
he hed hed to slarter;  
I 'd an idee thet they were built arter  
the darkie fashion all,  
An' kickin' colored folks about, you  
know, 's a kind o' national;  
But wen I jined I wornt so wise ez thet  
air queen o' Sheby,  
Fer, come to look at 'em, they aint  
much diff'rent from wut we be,  
An' here we air ascrougin' 'em out o' thir  
own dominions,

\* these fellers are verry propilly called Rank  
Heroes, and the more tha kill the ranker and  
more Herowick tha bekum. — H. B.

† it wuz "tumblebug" as he Writ it, but the  
parson put the Latten instid. i sed tother maid  
better meeter, but he said tha was eddykated  
peepl to Boston and tha would n't stan' it no  
how. idnow as tha wood and idnow as tha  
wood. — H. B.

‡ he means human beins, that's wut he  
means. i spose he kinder thought tha wuz  
human beans ware the Xisie Poles comes from.  
— H. B.

Ashelterin' 'em, ez Caleb sez, under our eagle's pinions,  
 Wich means to take a feller up jest by the slack o' 's trowsis  
 An' walk him Spanish clean right out o' all his homes an' houses;  
 Wal, it doos seem a curus way, but then hooraw fer Jackson!  
 It must be right, fer Caleb sez it 's reg'lar Anglo-saxon.  
 The Mex'cans don't fight fair, they say, they piz'n all the water,  
 An' du amazin' lots o' things thet is n't wut they ough' to;  
 Bein' they haint no lead, they make their bullets out o' copper  
 An' shoot the darned things at us, tu, wich Caleb sez aint proper;  
 He sez they 'd ough' to stan' right up an' let us pop 'em fairly  
 (Guess wen he ketches 'em at thet he 'll hev to git up airy),  
 Thet our nation 's bigger 'n theirn an' so its rights air bigger,  
 An' thet it 's all to make 'em free thet we air pullin' trigger,  
 Thet Anglo Saxondom's idee 's abreakin' 'em to pieces,  
 An' thet idee 's thet every man doos jest wut he damn pleases;  
 Ef I don't make his meanin' clear, perhaps in some respex I can,  
 I know thet "every man" don't mean a nigger or a Mexican;  
 An' there 's another thing I know, an' thet is, ef these creeturs,  
 Thet stick an Anglo-saxon mask onto State-prison feeturs,  
 Should come to Jaalam Centre fer to argify an' spout on 't,  
 The gals 'ould count the silver spoons the minnit they cleared out on 't.  
 This goin' ware glory waits ye haint one agreeable feetur,  
 An' ef it worn't fer wakin' snakes, I 'd home agin short meter;  
 O, would n't I be off, quick time, ef 't worn't thet I wuz sartin  
 They 'd let the daylight into me to pay me fer desartin!  
 I don't approve o' tellin' tales, but jest to you I may state  
 Our ossifers aint wut they wuz afore they left the Bay-state;  
 Then it wuz "Mister Sawin, sir, you 're middlin' well now, be ye?"

Step up an' take a nipper, sir; I 'm dreffle glad to see ye";  
 But now it 's "Ware 's my eppylet! here, Sawin, step an' fetch it!  
 An' mind your eye, be thund' rin' spry, or, damn ye, you shall ketch it!"  
 Wal, ez the Doctor sez, some pork wille bill so, but by mighty,  
 Ef I hed some on 'em to hum, I 'd give 'em linkum vity,  
 I 'd play the rogue's march on their hides an' other music follerin' —  
 But I must close my letter here, fer one on 'em 's ahollerin',  
 These Anglosaxon ossifers, — wal, taint no use ajawin',  
 I 'm safe enlisted fer the war,  
 Youm,  
 BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN.

[Those have not been wanting (as, indeed, when hath Satan been to seek for attorneys?) who have maintained that our late inroad upon Mexico was undertaken not so much for the avenging of any national quarrel, as for the spreading of free institutions and of Protestantism. *Capita viz duabus Anticyris medenda!* Verily I admire that no pious sergeant among these new Crusaders beheld Martin Luther riding at the front of the host upon a tamed pontifical bull, as, in that former invasion of Mexico, the zealous Gomara (spawn though he were of the Scarlet Woman) was favored with a vision of St. James of Compostella, skewering the infidels upon his apostolical lance. We read, also, that Richard of the lion heart, having gone to Palestine on a similar errand of mercy, was divinely encouraged to cut the throats of such Paynims as refused to swallow the bread of life (doubtless that they might be thereafter incapacitated for swallowing the filthy gobbits of Mahound) by angels of heaven, who cried to the king and his knights, — *Seigneurs, tuez! tuez!* providentially using the French tongue, as being the only one understood by their auditors. This would argue for the pantoglotism of these celestial intelligences, while, on the other hand, the Devil, *teste* Cotton Mather, is unversed in certain of the Indian dialects. Yet must he be a semeiologist the most expert, making himself intelligible to every people and kindred by signs; no other discourse, indeed, being needful, than such as the mackerel-fisher holds with his fanned quarry, who, if other bait be wanting, can by a bare bit of white rag at the end of a string captivate those foolish fishes. Such piscatorial persuasion is Satan cunning in. Before one he trails a hat and feather, or a bare feather without a hat; before another, a Presidential chair or a tide-waiter's stool, or a pulpit in the city, no matter what. To us, dangling there over our heads, they seem junkets dropped out of the seventh heaven, sops dipped in nectar, but, once in our mouths, they are all one, bits of fuzzy cotton.  
 This, however, by the way. It is time now *revocare gradum*. While so many miracles of this sort, vouched by eyewitnesses, have en-

couraged the arms of Papists, not to speak of Echelus at Marathon and those *Dioscuri* (whom we must conclude imps of the pit) who sundry times captained the pagan Roman soldiery, it is strange that our first American crusade was not in some such wise also signalized. Yet it is said that the Lord hath manifestly prospered our armies. This opens the question, whether, when our hands are strengthened to make great slaughter of our enemies, it be absolutely and demonstratively certain that this might is added to us from above, or whether some Potentate from an opposite quarter may not have a finger in it, as there are few pies into which his meddling digits are not thrust. Would the Sanctifier and Setter-apart of the seventh day have assisted in a victory gained on the Sabbath, as was one in the late war? Do we not know from Josephus, that, careful of His decree, a certain river of Judæa abstained from flowing on the day of Rest? Or has that day become less an object of His especial care since the year 1697, when so manifest a providence occurred to Mr. William Trowbridge, in answer to whose prayers, when he and all on shipboard to which him were starving, a dolphin was sent daily, "which was enough to serve 'em; only on *Saturdays* they still caught a couple, and on the *Lord's Days* they could catch none at all"? Haply they might have been permitted, by way of mortification, to take some few sculpins (those banes of the salt-water angler), which unseemly fish would, moreover, have conveyed to them a symbolical reproof for their breach of the day, being known in the rude dialect of our mariners as *Caps Cod Clergymen*.

It has been a refreshment to many nice consciences to know that our Chief Magistrate would not regard with eyes of approval the (by many esteemed) sinful pastime of dancing, and I own myself to be so far of that mind, that I could not but set my face against this Mexican Polka, though danced to the Presidential piping with a Gubernatorial second. If ever the country should be seized with another such mania *pro propaganda fide*, I think it would be wise to fill our bombshells with alternate copies of the Cambridge Platform and the Thirty-nine Articles, which would produce a mixture of the highest explosive power, and to wrap every one of our cannon-balls in a leaf of the New Testament, the reading of which is denied to those who sit in the darkness of Popery. Those iron evangelists would thus be able to disseminate vital religion and Gospel truth in quarters inaccessible to the ordinary missionary. I have seen lads, unimpregnate with the more sublimated punctiliousness of Walton, secure pickerel, taking their unwary *siesta* beneath the lily-pads too nigh the surface, with a gun and small shot. Why not, then, since gunpowder was unknown in the time of the Apostles (not to enter here upon the question whether it were discovered before that period by the Chinese), suit our metaphor to the age in which we live, and say *shooters* as well as *fishers* of men?

I do much fear that we shall be seized now and then with a Protestant fervor, as long as we have neighbor Naboths whose wallowings in Papistical mire excite our horror in exact proportion to the size and desirableness of their vineyards. Yet I rejoice that some earnest Protestants have been made by this war, — I

mean those who protested against it. Fewer they were than I could wish, for one might imagine America to have been colonized by a tribe of those nondescript African animals the Aye-Ayes, so difficult a word is *No* to us all. There is some malformation or defect of the vocal organs, which either prevents our uttering it at all, or gives it so thick a pronunciation as to be unintelligible. A mouth filled with the national pudding, or watering in expectation thereof, is wholly incompetent to this refractory monosyllable. An abject and herpetetic Public Opinion is the Pope, the Anti-Christ, for us to protest against *e corde cordium*. And by what College of Cardinals is this our God's-vicar, our binder and looser, elected? Very like, by the sacred conclave of Tag, Rag, and Bobtail, in the gracious atmosphere of the grog-shop. Yet it is of this that we must all be puppets. This thumps the pulpit-cushion, this guides the editor's pen, this wags the senator's tongue. This decides what Scriptures are canonical, and shuffles Christ away into the Apocrypha. According to that sentence fathered upon Solon, *ὄντω δημόσιον κακὸν ἴσχυρα οἰκάδ' ἑκάστῳ*. This unclean spirit is skilful to assume various shapes. I have known it to enter my own study and nudge my elbow of a Saturday, under the semblance of a wealthy member of my congregation. It were a great blessing, if every particular of what in the sum we call popular sentiment could carry about the name of its manufacturer stamped legibly upon it. I gave a stab under the fifth rib to that pestilent fallacy, — "Our country, right or wrong," — by tracing its original to a speech of Ensign Cilley at a dinner of the Bungtown Fencibles. — H. W.]

### No. III.

#### WHAT MR. ROBINSON THINKS.

[A FEW remarks on the following verses will not be out of place. The satire in them was not meant to have any personal, but only a general, application. Of the gentleman upon whose letter they were intended as a commentary Mr. Biglow had never heard, till he saw the letter itself. The position of the satirist is oftentimes one which he would not have chosen, had the election been left to himself. In attacking bad principles, he is obliged to select some individual who has made himself their exponent, and in whom they are impersonate, to the end that what he says may not, through ambiguity, be dissipated *tenues in auras*. For what says Seneca? *Longum iter per præcepta, breve et efficax per exempla*. A bad principle is comparatively harmless while it continues to be an abstraction, nor can the general mind comprehend it fully till it is printed in that large type which all men can read at sight, namely, the life and character, the sayings and doings, of particular persons. It is one of the cunningest fetches of Satan, that he never exposes himself directly to our arrows, but, still dodging behind this neighbor or that acquaintance, compels us to wound him through them, if at all. He holds our affections as hostages, the while he patches up a truce with our conscience.



Meanwhile, let us not forget that the aim of the true satirist is not to be severe upon persons, but only upon falsehood, and, as Truth and Falsehood start from the same point, and sometimes even go along together for a little way, his business is to follow the path of the latter after it diverges, and to show her floundering in the bog at the end of it. Truth is quite beyond the reach of satire. There is so brave a simplicity in her, that she can no more be made ridiculous than an oak or a pine. The danger of the satirist is, that continual use may deaden his sensibility to the force of language. He becomes more and more liable to strike harder than he knows or intends. He may be careful to put on his boxing-gloves, and yet forget that, the older they grow, the more plainly may the knuckles inside be felt. Moreover, in the heat of contest, the eye is insensibly drawn to the crown of victory, whose tawdry tinsel glitters through that dust of the ring which obscures Truth's wreath of simple leaves. I have sometimes thought that my young friend, Mr. Biglow, needed a monetary hand laid on his arm,—*aliquid sufflaminandus erat*. I have never thought it good husbandry to water the tender plants of reform with *agua fortis*, yet, where so much is to do in the beds, he were a sorry gardener who should wage a whole day's war with an iron scuffle on those ill weeds that make the garden-walks of life unsightly, when a sprinkle of Attic salt will wither them up. *Est ars etiam maleficendi*, says Scaliger, and truly it is a hard thing to say where the graceful gentleness of the lamb merges in downright sheepishness. We may conclude with worthy and wise Dr. Fuller, that "one may be a lamb in private wrongs, but in hearing general affronts to goodness they are asses which are not lions."—H. W.]

GUVERNER B. is a sensible man ;  
 He stays to his home an' looks arter  
 his folks ;  
 He draws his furrer ez straight ez he can,  
 An' into nobody's tater-patch pokes ;  
 But John P.  
 Robinson he  
 Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

My! aint it terrible? Wut shall we du?  
 We can't never choose him o' course,  
 —thet's flat ;

Guess we shall hev to come round, (don't  
 you?)  
 An' go in fer thunder an' guns, an' all  
 that ;  
 Fer John P.  
 Robinson he  
 Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

General C. is a dreffle smart man :  
 He's ben on all sides thet give places  
 or pelf ;  
 But consistency still wuz a part of his  
 plan,—

He's ben true to *one* party,—an' thet  
 is himself ;—  
 So John P.  
 Robinson he  
 Sez he shall vote fer General C.

General C. he goes in fer the war ;  
 He don't vally principle more 'n an  
 old cude ;  
 Wut did God make us raytional creeturs  
 fer,  
 But glory an' gunpowder, plunder an'  
 blood ?  
 So John P.  
 Robinson he  
 Sez he shall vote fer General C.

We were gittin' on nicely up here to our  
 village,  
 With good old idees o' wut's right an'  
 wut aint,  
 We kind o' thought Christ went agin  
 war an' pillage,  
 An' thet eppyletts worn't the best  
 mark of a saint ;  
 But John P.  
 Robinson he  
 Sez this kind o' thing's an exploded  
 idee.

The side of our country must ollers be  
 took,  
 An' President Polk, you know, *he* is  
 our country.  
 An' the angel thet writes all our sins in  
 a book  
 Puts the *debit* to him, an' to us the  
*per contry* ;  
 An' John P.  
 Robinson he  
 Sez this is his view o' the thing to  
 a T.

Parson Wilbur he calls all these argi-  
 munts lies ;  
 Sez they're nothin' on airth but jest  
*fee, faw, fum* :  
 An' thet all this big talk of our des-  
 tinies  
 Is half on it ign'ance, an' t' other half  
 rum ;  
 But John P.  
 Robinson he  
 Sez it aint no sech thing ; an', of  
 course, so must we.

Parson Wilbur sez *he* never heerd in his  
life

Thet th' Apostles rigged out in their  
swaller-tail coats,  
An' marched round in front of a drum  
an' a fife,

To git some on 'em office, an' some on  
'em votes ;

But John P.  
Robinson he

Sez they did n't know everythin'  
down in Judee.

Wal, it's a marcy we 've gut folks to  
tell us

The rights an' the wrongs o' these  
matters, I vow,—

God sends country lawyers, an' other  
wise fellers,

To start the world's team wen it gits in  
a slough ;

Fer John P.  
Robinson he

Sez the world 'll go right, ef he hol-  
lers out Gee !

[The attentive reader will doubtless have perceived in the foregoing poem an allusion to that pernicious sentiment, — "Our country, right or wrong." It is an abuse of language to call a certain portion of land, much more, certain personages, elevated for the time being to high station, our country. I would not sever nor loosen a single one of those ties by which we are united to the spot of our birth, nor diminish by a tittle the respect due to the Magistrate. I love our own Bay State too well to do the one, and as for the other, I have myself for nigh forty years exercised, however unworthily, the function of Justice of the Peace, having been called thereto by the unsolicited kindness of that most excellent man and upright patriot, Caleb Strong. *Patrici fumus igne alieno luculentior* is best qualified with this, — *Ubi libertas, ibi patria*. We are inhabitants of two worlds, and owe a double, but not a divided allegiance. In virtue of our clay, this little ball of earth exacts a certain loyalty of us, while, in our capacity as spirits, we are admitted citizens of an invisible and holier fatherland. There is a patriotism of the soul whose claim absolves us from our other and terrene fealty. Our true country is that ideal realm which we represent to ourselves under the names of religion, duty, and the like. Our terrestrial organizations are but far-off approaches to so fair a model, and all they are verily traitors who resist not any attempt to divert them from this their original intentment. When, therefore, one would have us to fling up our caps and shout with the multitude, — "*Our country, however bounded!*" he demands of us that we sacrifice the larger to the less, the higher to the lower, and that we yield to the imaginary claims of a few acres of soil our duty and privilege as liegemen of Truth.

Our true country is bounded on the north and the south, on the east and the west, by Justice, and when she oversteps that invisible boundary-line by so much as a hair's-breadth, she ceases to be our mother, and chooses rather to be looked upon *quasi noverca*. That is a hard choice when our earthly love of country calls upon us to tread one path and our duty calls us to another. We must make as noble and becoming an election as did Penelope between Icarus and Ulysses. Veiling our faces, we must take silently the hand of Duty to follow her.

Shortly after the publication of the foregoing poem, there appeared some comments upon it in one of the public prints which seemed to call for animadversion. I accordingly addressed to Mr. Buckingham, of the Boston Courier, the following letter.

"JALAM, November 4, 1847.

"To the Editor of the Courier :

"RESPECTED SIR, — Calling at the post-office this morning, our worthy and efficient postmaster offered for my perusal a paragraph in the Boston Morning Post of the 3d instant, wherein certain effusions of the pastoral muse are attributed to the pen of Mr. James Russell Lowell. For aught I know or can affirm to the contrary, this Mr. Lowell may be a very deserving person and a youth of parts (though I have seen verses of his which I could never rightly understand) ; and if he be such, he, I am certain, as well as I, would be free from any proclivity to appropriate to himself whatever of credit (or discredit) may honestly belong to another. I am confident, that, in penning these few lines, I am only forestalling a disclaimer from that young gentleman, whose silence hitherto, when rumor pointed to him-ward, has excited in my bosom mingled emotions of sorrow and surprise. Well may my young parishioner, Mr. Biglow, exclaim with the poet,

'*Sic vos non vobis,*' &c. ;

though, in saying this, I would not convey the impression that he is a proficient in the Latin tongue, — the tongue, I might add, of a Horace and a Tully.

"Mr. B. does not employ his pen, I can safely say, for any lucre of worldly gain, or to be exalted by the carnal plaudits of men, *digito monstrari*, &c. He does not wait upon Providence for mercies, and in his heart mean *merces*. But I should esteem myself as verily deficient in my duty (who am his friend and in some unworthy sort his spiritual *fidus Achates*, &c.), if I did not step forward to claim for him whatever measure of applause might be assigned to him by the judicious.

"If this were a fitting occasion, I might venture here a brief dissertation touching the manner and kind of my young friend's poetry. But I dubitate whether this abstruser sort of speculation (though enlivened by some apposite instances from Aristophanes) would sufficiently interest your oppidan readers. As regards their satirical tone, and their plainness of speech, I will only say, that, in my pastoral experience, I have found that the Arch-Enemy loves nothing better than to be treated as a religious,

moral, and intellectual being, and that there is no *apage Sathanas!* so potent as ridicule. But it is a kind of weapon that must have a button of good-nature on the point of it.

"The productions of Mr. B. have been stigmatized in some quarters as unpatriotic; but I can vouch that he loves his native soil with that hearty, though discriminating, attachment which springs from an intimate social intercourse of many years' standing. In the ploughing season, no one has a deeper share in the well-being of the country than he. If Dean Swift were right in saying that he who makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before confers a greater benefit on the state than he who taketh a city, Mr. B. might exhibit a fairer claim to the Presidency than General Scott himself. I think that some of those disinterested lovers of the hard-handed democracy, whose fingers have never touched anything rougher than the dollars of our common country, would hesitate to compare palms with him. It would do your heart good, respected Sir, to see that young man mow. He cuts a cleaner and wider swath than any in this town.

"But it is time for me to be at my Post. It is very clear that my young friend's shot has struck the lintel, for the Post is shaken (Amos ix. 1). The editor of that paper is a strenuous advocate of the Mexican war, and a colonel, as I am given to understand. I presume, that, being necessarily absent in Mexico, he has left his journal in some less judicious hands. At any rate, the Post has been too swift on this occasion. It could hardly have cited a more incontrovertible line from any poem than that which it has selected for animadversion, namely, —

'We kind o' thought Christ went agin war an' pillage.'

"If the Post maintains the converse of this proposition, it can hardly be considered as a safe guide-post for the moral and religious portions of its party, however many other excellent qualities of a post it may be blessed with. There is a sign in London on which is painted, — 'The Green Man.' It would do very well as a portrait of any individual who should support so unscriptural a thesis. As regards the language of the line in question, I am bold to say that He who readeth the hearts of men will not account any dialect unseemly which conveys a sound and pious sentiment. I could wish that such sentiments were more common, however uncouthly expressed. Saint Ambrose affirms, that *veritas a quocunque* (why not, then, *quomodocunque?*) *dicatur, a spiritu sancto est.* Digest also this of Baxter: 'The plainest words are the most profitable oratory in the weightiest matters.'

"When the paragraph in question was shown to Mr. Biglow, the only part of it which seemed to give him any dissatisfaction was that which classed him with the Whig party. He says, that, if resolutions are a nourishing kind of diet, that party must be in a very hearty and flourishing condition; for that they have quietly eaten more good ones of their own baking than he could have conceived to be possible without repletion. He has been for some years past (I regret to say) an ardent opponent of those sound doctrines of protective policy which

form so prominent a portion of the creed of that party. I confess, that, in some discussions which I have had with him on this point in my study, he has displayed a vein of obstinacy which I had not hitherto detected in his composition. He is also (*horresco referens*) infected in no small measure with the peculiar notions of a print called the *Liberator*, whose heresies I take every proper opportunity of combating, and of which, I thank God, I have never read a single line.

"I did not see Mr. B.'s verses until they appeared in print, and there is certainly one thing in them which I consider highly improper. I allude to the personal references to myself by name. To confer notoriety on an humble individual who is laboring quietly in his vocation, and who keeps his cloth as free as he can from the dust of the political arena (though *ve mihi si non evangelizavero*), is no doubt an indecorum. The sentiments which he attributes to me I will not deny to be mine. They were embodied, though in a different form, in a discourse preached upon the last day of public fasting, and were acceptable to my entire people (of whatever political views), except the postmaster, who dissented *ex officio*. I observe that you sometimes devote a portion of your paper to a religious summary. I should be well pleased to furnish a copy of my discourse for insertion in this department of your instructive journal. By omitting the advertisements, it might easily be got within the limits of a single number, and I venture to insure you the sale of some scores of copies in this town. I will cheerfully render myself responsible for ten. It might possibly be advantageous to issue it as an *extra*. But perhaps you will not esteem it an object, and I will not press it. My offer does not spring from any weak desire of seeing my name in print; for I can enjoy this satisfaction at any time by turning to the Triennial Catalogue of the University, where it also possesses that added emphasis of Italics with which those of my calling are distinguished.

"I would simply add, that I continue to fit ingenious youth for college, and that I have two spacious and airy sleeping apartments at this moment unoccupied. *Ingenuas didicisse*, &c. Terms, which vary according to the circumstances of the parents, may be known on application to me by letter, post-paid. In all cases the lad will be expected to fetch his own towels. This rule, Mrs. W. desires me to add, has no exceptions.

"Respectfully, your obedient servant,

"HOMER WILBUR, A. M.

"P. S. Perhaps the last paragraph may look like an attempt to obtain the insertion of my circular gratuitously. If it should appear to you in that light, I desire that you would erase it, or charge for it at the usual rates, and deduct the amount from the proceeds in your hands from the sale of my discourse, when it shall be printed. My circular is much longer and more explicit, and will be forwarded without charge to any who may desire it. It has been very neatly executed on a letter sheet, by a very deserving printer, who attends upon my ministry, and is a creditable specimen of the typographic art. I have one hung over my mantel-piece in a neat frame, where it makes a



beautiful and appropriate ornament, and balances the profile of Mrs. W., cut with her toes by the young lady born without arms.

"H. W."

I have in the foregoing letter mentioned General Scott in connection with the Presidency, because I have been given to understand that he has blown to pieces and otherwise caused to be destroyed more Mexicans than any other commander. His claim would therefore be deservedly considered the strongest. Until accurate returns of the Mexicans killed, wounded, and maimed be obtained, it will be difficult to settle these nice points of precedence. Should it prove that any other officer has been more meritorious and destructive than General S., and has thereby rendered himself more worthy of the confidence and support of the conservative portion of our community, I shall cheerfully insert his name, instead of that of General S., in a future edition. It may be thought, likewise, that General S. has invalidated his claims by too much attention to the decencies of apparel, and the habits belonging to a gentleman. These abstruser points of statesmanship are beyond my scope. I wonder not that successful military achievement should attract the admiration of the multitude. Rather do I rejoice with wonder to behold how rapidly this sentiment is losing its hold upon the popular mind. It is related of Thomas Warton, the second of that honored name who held the office of Poetry Professor at Oxford, that, when one wished to find him, being absconded, as was his wont, in some obscure alehouse, he was counselled to traverse the city with a drum and fife, the sound of which inspiring music would be sure to draw the Doctor from his retirement into the street. We are all more or less bitten with this martial insanity. *Nescio qua dulcedine . . . cunctos ducit.* I confess to some infection of that itch myself. When I see a Brigadier-General maintaining his insecure elevation in the saddle under the severe fire of the training-field, and when I remember that some military enthusiasts, through haste, inexperience, or an over-desire to lend reality to those fictitious combats, will sometimes discharge their ramrods, I cannot but admire, while I deplore, the mistaken devotion of those heroic officers. *Semel insanivimus omnes.* I was myself, during the late war with Great Britain, chaplain of a regiment, which was fortunately never called to active military duty. I mention this circumstance with regret rather than pride. Had I been summoned to actual warfare, I trust that I might have been strengthened to bear myself after the manner of that reverend father in our New England Israel, Dr. Benjamin Colman, who, as we are told in Turell's life of him, when the vessel in which he had taken passage for England was attacked by a French privateer, "fought like a philosopher and a Christian, . . . and prayed all the while he charged and fired." As this note is already long, I shall not here enter upon a discussion of the question, whether Christians may lawfully be soldiers. I think it sufficiently evident, that, during the first two centuries of the Christian era, at least, the two professions were esteemed incompatible. Consult Jortin on this head. — H. W.]

#### No. IV.

REMARKS OF INCREASE D. O'PHACE, ESQUIRE, AT AN EXTRUMPERY CAUCUS IN STATE STREET, REPORTED BY MR. H. BIGLOW.

[The ingenious reader will at once understand that no such speech as the following was ever *totidem verbis* pronounced. But there are simpler and less guarded wits, for the satisfying of which such an explanation may be needful. For there are certain invisible lines, which as Truth successively overpasses, she becomes Untruth to one and another of us, as a large river, flowing from one kingdom into another, sometimes takes a new name, albeit the waters undergo no change, how small soever. There is, moreover, a truth of fiction more veracious than the truth of fact, as that of the Poet, which represents to us things and events as they ought to be, rather than servilely copies them as they are imperfectly imaged in the crooked and smoky glass of our mundane affairs. It is this which makes the speech of Antonius, though originally spoken in no wider a forum than the brain of Shakespeare, more historically valuable than that other which Appian has reported, by as much as the understanding of the Englishman was more comprehensive than that of the Alexandrian. Mr. Biglow, in the present instance, has only made use of a license assumed by all the historians of antiquity, who put into the mouths of various characters such words as seem to them most fitting to the occasion and to the speaker. If it be objected that no such oration could ever have been delivered, I answer, that there are few assemblages for speech-making which do not better deserve the title of *Parliamentum Indocorum* than did the sixth Parliament of Henry the Fourth, and that men still continue to have as much faith in the Oracle of Fools as ever Pantagruel had. Howell, in his letters, recounts a merry tale of a certain ambassador of Queen Elizabeth, who, having written two letters, — one to her Majesty, and the other to his wife, — directed them at cross-purposes, so that the Queen was beducked and bedared and requested to send a change of hose, and the wife was beprincessed and otherwise unwontedly besuperlatived, till the one feared for the wits of her ambassador, and the other for those of her husband. In like manner it may be presumed that our speaker has misdirected some of his thoughts, and given to the whole theatre what he would have wished to confide only to a select auditory at the back of the curtain. For it is seldom that we can get any frank utterance from men, who address, for the most part, a Buncombe either in this world or the next. As for their audiences, it may be truly said of our people, that they enjoy one political institution in common with the ancient Athenians: I mean a certain profitless kind of *ostracism*, wherewith, nevertheless, they seem hitherto well enough content. For in Presidential elections, and other affairs of the sort, whereas I observe that the *oysters* fall to the lot of comparatively few, the *shells* (such as the privileges of voting as they are told to do by the *ostracori* aforesaid, and-of huzzaing at public meetings)

are very liberally distributed among the people, as being their prescriptive and quite sufficient portion.

The occasion of the speech is supposed to be Mr. Palfrey's refusal to vote for the Whig candidate for the Speakership. — H. W.]

No? Hez he? He haint, though?

Wut? Voted agin him?

Ef the bird of our country could ketch him, she'd skin him;

I seem 's though I see her, with wrath in each quill,

Like a chancery lawyer, aflin' her bill, An' grindin' her talents ez sharp ez all nater,

To pounce like a writ on the back o' the traitor.

Forgive me, my friends, ef I seem to be het,

But a crisis like this must with vigor be met;

Wen an Arnold the star-spangled banner bestains,

Holl Fourth o' Julys seem to bile in my veins.

Who ever'd ha' thought sech a pisonous rig

Would be run by a chap thet wuz chose fer a Wig?

"We knowed wut his princerples wuz 'fore we sent him?"

Wut wuz there in them from this vote to pervent him?

A marciful Providence fashioned us holler

O' purpose thet we might our principles swaller;

It can hold any quantity on 'em, the belly can,

An' bring 'em up ready fer use like the pelican,

Or more like the kangaroo, who (wich is stranger)

Puts her family into her pouch wen there 's danger.

Aint princerples precious? then, who 's goin' to use it

Wen there 's resk o' some chap's gittin' up to abuse it?

I can't tell the wy on 't, but nothin' is so sure

Ez thet princerples kind o' gits spiled by exposure;\*

\* The speaker is of a different mind from Tully, who, in his recently discovered tractate *De Republica*, tells us, *Nec vero habere virtu-*

A man thet lets all sorts o' folks git a sight on 't

Ough' to hev it all took right away, every mite on 't;

Ef he can't keep it all to himself wen it 's wise to,

He aint one it 's fit to trust nothin' so nice to.

Besides, ther 's a wonderful power in latitude

To shift a man's morril relations an' attitude;

Some flossifiers think thet a fakkilty 's granted

The minnit it 's proved to be thoroughly wanted,

Thet a change o' demand makes a change o' condition,

An' thet everythin' 's nothin' except by position;

Ez, fer instance, thet rubber-trees fust begun bearin'

Wen p'litikle consunnces come into wearin',

Thet the fears of a monkey, whose holt chanced to fail,

Drawed the vertibry out to a prehensile tail;

So, wen one 's chose to Congriss, ez soon ez he 's in it,

A collar grows right round his neck in a minnit,

An' sartin it is thet a man cannot be strict

In bein' himself, wen he gits to the Deestriect,

Fer a coat thet sets wal here in ole Massachusetts,

Wen it gits on to Washinton, somehow askew sets.

Resolves, do you say, o' the Springfield Convention?

Thet 's percisely the pint I was goin' to mention;

*tem satis est, quasi artem aliquam, nisi vitare,* and from our Milton, who says: "I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat." — *Arcop.* He had taken the words out of the Roman's mouth, without knowing it, and might well exclaim with Donatus (if Saint Jerome's tutor may stand sponsor for a curse), *Percant qui ante nos nostra dixerint!* — H. W.

Resolves air a thing we most gen'ally  
 keep ill,  
 They 're a cheap kind o' dust fer the  
 eyes o' the people;  
 A parcel o' delligits jest git together  
 An' chat fer a spell o' the crops an' the  
 weather,  
 Then, comin' to order, they squabble  
 awile  
 An' let off the speeches they 're ferful 'll  
 spile;  
 Then — Resolve, — Thet we wunt hev  
 an inch o' slave territory;  
 Thet President Polk's holl perceedins air  
 very tory;  
 Thet the war is a damned war, an' them  
 thet enlist in it  
 Should hev a cravat with a drefle tight  
 twist in it;  
 Thet the war is a war fer the spreadin'  
 o' slavery;  
 Thet our army desarves our best thanks  
 fer their bravery;  
 Thet we 're the original friends o' the  
 nation,  
 All the rest air a paltry an' base fabrica-  
 tion;  
 Thet we highly respect Messrs. A, B, an'  
 C,  
 An' ez deeply despise Messrs. E, F, an' G.  
 In this way they go to the eend o' the  
 chapter,  
 An' then they bust out in a kind of a  
 raptur  
 About their own vartoo, an' folks's  
 stone-blindness  
 To the men thet 'ould actilly do 'em a  
 kindness, —  
 The American eagle, — the Pilgrims thet  
 landed, —  
 Till on ole Plymouth Rock they git  
 finally stranded.  
 Wal, the people they listen an' say,  
 "Thet 's the ticket;  
 Ez fer Mexico, 't aint no great glory to  
 lick it,  
 But 't would be a darned shame to go  
 pullin' o' triggers  
 To extend the aree of abusin' the nig-  
 gers."  
 So they march in percessions, an' git up  
 hooraws,  
 An' tramp thru the mud fer the good o'  
 the cause,  
 An' think they 're a kind o' fulfillin' the  
 prophecies.

Wen they 're on'y jest changin' the  
 holders of offices;  
 Ware A sot afore, B is comf'tably seated,  
 One humbug's victor'ous an' t' other de-  
 feated,  
 Each hounnable doughface gits jest wut  
 he axes,  
 An' the people, — their annoal soft-  
 sodder an' taxes.  
 Now, to keep unimpaired all these glo-  
 rious feeturs  
 Thet characterize morril an' reasonin'  
 creeturs,  
 Thet give every paytriot all he can cram,  
 Thet oust the untrustworthy President  
 Flam,  
 An' stick honest President Sham in his  
 place,  
 To the manifest gain o' the holl human  
 race,  
 An' to some indervidgewals on 't in  
 partickler,  
 Who love Public Opinion an' know how  
 to tickle her, —  
 I say thet a party with gret aims like  
 these  
 Must stick jest ez close ez a hive full o'  
 bees.  
 I 'm willin' a man should go tollable  
 strong  
 Agin wrong in the abstract, fer thet kind  
 o' wrong  
 Is ollers unpop'lar an' never gits pitied,  
 Because it 's a crime no one never com-  
 mitted;  
 But he mus' n't be hard on partickler  
 sins,  
 Coz then he 'll be kickin' the people's  
 own shins;  
 On'y look at the Demmercrats, see wut  
 they 've done  
 Jest simply by stickin' together like  
 fun;  
 They 've sucked us right into a mis'able  
 war  
 Thet no one on airth aint responsible  
 for;  
 They 've run us a hundred cool millions  
 in debt  
 (An' fer Demmercrat Horners ther 's  
 good plums left yet);  
 They talk agin tayriiffs, but act fer a  
 high one,  
 An' so coax all parties to build up their  
 Zion;



To the people they 're ollers ez slick ez  
molasses,  
An' butter their bread on both sides with  
The Masses,  
Half o' whom they 've persuaded, by way  
of a joke,  
Thet Washinton's mantelpiece fell upon  
Polk.

Now all o' these blessin's the Wigs  
might enjoy,  
Ef they 'd gumption enough the right  
means to imploy ;\*

For the silver spoon born in Dermoc-  
'acy's mouth  
Is a kind of a scringe thet they hev to  
the South ;

Their masters can cuss 'em an' kick 'em  
an' wale 'em,  
An' they notice it less 'an the ass did to  
Balaam ;

In this way they screw into second-rate  
offices

Wich the slaveholder thinks 'ould sub-  
stract too much off his ease ;

The file-leaders, I mean, du, fer they, by  
their wiles,

Unlike the old viper, grow fat on their  
files.

Wal, the Wigs hev been tryin' to grab  
all this prey frum 'em

An' to hook this nice spoon o' good for-  
tin' away frum 'em,

An' they might ha' succeeded, ez likely  
ez not,

In lickin' the Demmercrats all round  
the lot,

Ef it warn't thet, wile all faithful Wigs  
were their knees on,

Some stuffy old codger would holler out,  
— "Treason !

You must keep a sharp eye on a dog thet  
hez bit you once,

An' *I* aint agoin' to cheat my constit-  
oounts," —

Wen every fool knows thet a man repre-  
sents

Not the fellers thet sent him, but them  
on the fence, —

Impartially ready to jump either side  
An' make the fust use of a turn o' the  
tide, —

The waiters on Providence here in the  
city,

\* That was a pithy saying of Persius, and fits  
our politicians without a wrinkle. — *Magister  
artis, ingenilique largitor venter.* — H. W.

Who compose wut they call a State Cen-  
terl Comitty.

Constitoounts air hendy to help a man in,  
But arterwards don't weigh the heft of a  
pin.

Wy, the people can't all live on Uncle  
Sam's pus,

So they 've nothin' to du with 't fer  
better or wus ;

It 's the folks thet air kind o' brought  
up to depend on 't

Thet hev any consarn in 't, an' thet is the  
end on 't.

Now here wuz New England ahevin' the  
honor

Of a chance at the Speakership showered  
upon her ; —

Do you say, — "She don't want no more  
Speakers, but fewer ;

She 's hed plenty o' them, wut she wants  
is a *doer*" ?

Fer the matter o' thet, it 's notorious in  
town

Thet her own representatives du her  
quite brown.

But thet 's nothin' to du with it ; wut  
right hed Palfrey

To mix himself up with fanatical small  
fry ?

Warn't we gittin' on prime with our hot  
an' cold blowin',

Acondemnin' the war wilst we kep' it  
agoin' ?

We 'd assumed with gret skill a com-  
mandin' position,

On this side or thet, no one could n't  
tell wich one,

So, wutever side wipped, we 'd a chance  
at the plunder

An' could sue fer infringin' our pay-  
tentented thunder ;

We were ready to vote fer whoever wuz  
eligible,

Ef on all pints at issou he 'd stay unin-  
telligible.

Wal, sposin' we hed to gulp down our  
perfections,

We were ready to come out next morn-  
in' with fresh ones ;

Besides, ef we did, 't was our business  
alone,

Fer could n't we du wut we would with  
our own ?

An' ef a man can, wen pervisions hev rizso,  
Eat up his own words, it 's a marcy it  
is so.

Wy, these chaps frum the North, with  
back-bones to 'em, darn 'em,  
'Ould be wuth more 'an Gennle Tom  
Thumb is to Barnum :

Ther 's enough thet to office on this very  
plan grow,

By exhibitin' how very small a man can  
grow ;

But an M. C. frum here ollers hastens to  
state he

Belongs to the order called invertebraty,  
Wence some gret filologists judge primy  
fashy

Thet M. C. is M. T. by paronomashy ;  
An' these few exceptions air *loosus nay-  
tury*

Folks 'ould put down their quarters to  
stare at, like fury.

It 's no use to open the door o' success,  
Ef a member can bolt so fer nothin' or  
less ;

Wy, all o' them grand constitootional  
pillers

Our fore-fathers fetched with 'em over  
the billers,

Them pillers the people so soundly hev  
slep' on,

Wile to slav'ry, invasion, an' debt they  
were swep' on,

Wile our Destiny higher an' higher kep'  
mountin'

(Though I guess folks 'll stare wen she  
hends her account in),

Ef members in this way go kicken' agin  
'em,

They wunt hev so much ez a feather left  
in 'em.

An', ez fer this Palfrey,\* we thought wen  
we 'd gut him in,

He 'd go kindly in wutever harness we  
put him in ;

Supposin' we *did* know that he wuz a  
peace man ?

Doos he think he can be Uncle Sammler's  
policeman,

An' wen Sam gits tipsy an' kicks up a  
riot,

Lead him off to the lockup to snooze till  
he 's quiet ?

Wy, the war is a war thet true paytriots  
can bear, ef

It leads to the fat promised land of a  
tayriff ;

\* There is truth yet in this of Juvenal, —

"Dat veniam corvis, vexat censura columbas."

H. W.

*We* don't go an' fight it, nor aint to be  
driv on,

Nor Demmercrats nuther, thet hev wut  
to live on ;

Ef it aint jest the thing thet 's well  
pleasin' to God,

It makes us thought highly on else-  
where abroad ;

The Rooshian black eagle looks blue in  
his erie

An' shakes both his heads wen he hears  
o' Monteery ;

In the Tower Victory sets, all of a flus-  
ter,

An' reads, with locked doors, how we  
won Cherry Buster ;

An' old Philip Lewis — thet come an'  
kep' school here

Fer the mere sake o' scorin' his ryalist  
ruler

On the tenderest part of our kings *in  
futuro* —

Hides his crown underneath an old shut  
in his bureau,

Breaks off in his brags to a suckle o'  
merry kings,

How he often hed hidid young native  
Amerrikins,

An' turnin' quite faint in the midst of  
his fooleries,

Sneaks down stairs to bolt the front  
door o' the Tooleries.\*

You say, — " We 'd ha' scared 'em by  
growin' in peace,

A plaguy sight more then by bobberies  
like these " ?

Who is it dares say thet our naytional  
eagle

\* Jortin is willing to allow of other miracles  
besides those recorded in Holy Writ, and why  
not of other prophecies ? It is granting too  
much to Satan to suppose him, as divers of the  
learned have done, the inspirer of the ancient  
oracles. Wiser, I esteem it, to give chance  
the credit of the successful ones. What is said  
here of Louis Philippe was verified in some of  
its minute particulars within a few months'  
time. Enough to have made the fortune of  
Delphi or Hammon, and no thanks to Beelzebub  
neither ! That of Seneca in Medea will  
suit here : —

" Rapida fortuna ac levis  
Præcepsque regno eripuit, exalio dedit."

Let us allow, even to richly deserved misfor-  
tune, our commiseration, and be not over-hasty  
meanwhile in our censure of the French people,  
left for the first time to govern themselves, re-  
membering that wise sentence of Æschylus, —

" Δρας δὲ τραχὺς ὄστις ἂν νέον κρατῆ."

H. W.

Wun't much longer be classed with the  
birds thet air regal,  
Coz them be hooked beaks, an' she,  
arter this slaughter,  
'll bring back a bill ten times longer 'n  
she ough' to " ?  
Wut 's your name? Come, I see ye, you  
up-country feller,  
You 've put me out severil times with  
your beller ;  
Out with it ! Wut? Biglow? I say  
nothin' furdur,  
Thet feller would like nothin' better 'n a  
murder ;  
He 's a traiter, blasphemur, an' wut  
ruther worse is,  
He puts all his ath'ism in drefle bad  
verses ;  
Society aint safe till sech monsters air out  
on it,  
Refer to the Post, ef you hev the least  
doubt on it ;  
Wy, he goes agin war, agin indirect  
taxes,  
Agin sellin' wild lands 'cept to settlers  
with axes,  
Agin holdin' o' slaves, though he knows  
it 's the corner  
Our libbaty rests on, the mis'able  
scorner !  
In short, he would wholly upset with  
his ravages  
All thet keeps us above the brute crit-  
ters an' savages,  
An' pitch into all kinds o' briles an'  
confusions  
The holl of our civilized, free institu-  
tions ;  
He writes fer thet ruther unsafe print,  
the Courier,  
An' likely ez not hez a squintin' to  
Foorier ;  
I 'll be —, thet is, I mean I 'll be  
blest,  
Ef I hark to a word frum so noted a  
pest ;  
I sha' n't talk with *him*, my religion 's  
too ferwent. —  
Good mornin', my friends, I'm your  
most humble servant.

[Into the question, whether the ability to express ourselves in articulate language has been productive of moregood or evil, I shall not here enter at large. The two faculties of speech and of speech-making are wholly diverse in their natures. By the first we make ourselves intelligible, by the last unintelligible, to our fellows. It has not seldom occurred to me (noting, how,

in our national legislature everything runs to talk, as lettuces, if the season or the soil be unpropitious, shoot up lankly to seed, instead of forming handsome heads) that Babel was the first Congress, the earliest mill erected for the manufacture of gabble. In these days, what with Town Meetings, School Committees, Boards (lumber) of one kind and another, Congresses, Parliaments, Diets, Indian Councils, Palavers, and the like, there is scarce a village which has not its factories of this description driven by milk-and-water power. I cannot conceive the confusion of tongues to have been the curse of Babel, since I esteem my ignorance of other languages as a kind of Martello-tower, in which I am safe from the furious bombardments of foreign garrulity. For this reason I have ever preferred the study of the dead languages, those primitive formations being Ararats upon whose silent peaks I sit secure and watch this new deluge without fear, though it rain figures (*simulacra*, semblances) of speech forty days and nights together, as it not uncommonly happens. Thus is my coat, as it were, without buttons by which any but a vernacular wild bore can seize me. Is it not possible that the Shakers may intend to convey a quiet reproof and hint, in fastening their outer garments with hooks and eyes?

This reflection concerning Babel, which I find in no Commentary, was first thrown upon my mind when an excellent deacon of my congregation (being infected with the Second Advent delusion) assured me that he had received a first instalment of the gift of tongues as a small earnest of larger possessions in the like kind to follow. For, of a truth, I could not reconcile it with my ideas of the Divine justice and mercy that the single wall which protected people of other languages from the incursions of this otherwise well-meaning propagandist should be broken down.

In reading Congressional debates, I have fancied, that, after the subsidence of those painful buzzings in the brain which result from such exercises, I detected a slender residuum of valuable information. I made the discovery that *nothing* takes longer in the saying than anything else, for as *ex nihilo nihil fit*, so from one *nothing* any number of similar ones may be produced. I would recommend to the attention of *visa voce* debaters and controversialists the admirable example of the monk Copres, who, in the fourth century, stood for half an hour in the midst of a great fire, and thereby silenced a Manichean antagonist who had less of the salamander in him. As for those who quarrel in print, I have no concern with them here, since the eyelids are a divinely granted shield against all such. Moreover, I have observed in many modern books that the printed portion is becoming gradually smaller, and the number of blank or fly-leaves (as they are called) greater. Should this fortunate tendency of literature continue, books will grow more valuable from year to year, and the whole Serbonian bog yield to the advances of firm arable land.

The sagacious Lacedæmonians hearing that Tesephone had bragged that he could talk all day long on any given subject, made no more ado, but forthwith banished him, whereby they supplied him a topic and at the same time took care that his experiment upon it should be tried out of ear-shot.



I have wondered, in the Representatives' Chamber of our own Commonwealth, to mark how little impression seemed to be produced by that emblematic fish suspended over the heads of the members. Our wiser ancestors, no doubt, hung it there as being the animal which the Pythagoreans revered for its silence, and which certainly in that particular does not so well merit the epithet *cold-blooded*, by which naturalists distinguish it, as certain bipeds, afflicted with ditch-water on the brain, who take occasion to tap themselves in Fan-euil Halls, meeting-houses, and other places of public resort. — H. W.]

## No. V.

## THE DEBATE IN THE SENNIT.

## SOT TO A NUSRY RHYME.

[THE incident which gave rise to the debate satirized in the following verses was the unsuccessful attempt of Drayton and Sayres to give freedom to seventy men and women, fellow-beings and fellow-Christians. Had Tripoli, instead of Washington, been the scene of this undertaking, the unhappy leaders in it would have been as secure of the theoretic as they now are of the practical part of martyrdom. I question whether the Dey of Tripoli is blessed with a District Attorney so benighted as ours at the seat of government. Very fitly is he named Key, who would allow himself to be made the instrument of locking the door of hope against sufferers in such a cause. Not all the waters of the ocean can cleanse the vile smutch of the jailer's fingers from off that little Key. *Athena clavis*, a brazen Key indeed !

Mr. Calhoun, who is made the chief speaker in this burlesque, seems to think that the light of the nineteenth century is to be put out as soon as he tinkles his little cow-bell curfew. Whenever slavery is touched, he sets up his scarecrow of dissolving the Union. This may do for the North, but I should conjecture that something more than a pumpkin-lantern is required to scare manifest and irretrievable Destiny out of her path. Mr. Calhoun cannot let go the apron-string of the Past. The Past is a good nurse, but we must be weaned from her sooner or later, even though, like Plotinus, we should run home from school to ask the breast, after we are tolerably well-grown youths. It will not do for us to hide our faces in her lap, whenever the strange Future holds out her arms and asks us to come to her.

But we are all alike. We have all heard it said, often enough, that little boys must not play with fire; and yet, if the matches be taken away from us, and put out of reach upon the shelf, we must needs get into our little corner, and scowl and stamp and threaten the dire revenge of going to bed without our supper. The world shall stop till we get our dangerous playing again. Dame Earth, meanwhile, who has more than enough household matters to mind, goes bustling hither and thither as a hiss or a sputter tells her that this or that kettle of hers is boiling over, and before bedtime we are glad

to eat our porridge cold, and gulp down our dignity along with it.

Mr. Calhoun has somehow acquired the name of a great statesman, and, if it be great statesmanship to put lance in rest and run a tilt at the Spirit of the Age with the certainty of being next moment hurled neck and heels into the dust amid universal laughter, he deserves the title. He is the Sir Kay of our modern chivalry. He should remember the old Scandinavian mythus. Thor was the strongest of gods, but he could not wrestle with Time, nor so much as lift up a fold of the great snake which bound the universe together; and when he smote the Earth, though with his terrible mallet, it was but as if a leaf had fallen. Yet all the while it seemed to Thor that he had only been wrestling with an old woman, striving to lift a cat, and striking a stupid giant on the head.

And in old times, doubtless, the giants were stupid, and there was no better sport for the Sir Launcelots and Sir Gawains than to go about cutting off their great blundering heads with enchanted swords. But things have wonderfully changed. It is the giants, nowadays, that have the science and the intelligence, while the chivalrous Don Quixotes of Conservatism still cumber themselves with the clumsy armor of a bygone age. On whirls the restless globe through unsounded time, with its cities and its silences, its births and funerals, half light, half shade, but never wholly dark, and sure to swing round into the happy morning at last. With an involuntary smile, one sees Mr. Calhoun letting slip his pack-thread cable with a crooked pin at the end of it to anchor South Carolina upon the bank and shoal of the Past. — H. W.]

## TO MR. BUCKENAM.

MR. EDITER, As i wuz kinder prunin round, in a little nussry sot out a year or 2 a go, the Dbait in the sennit cum inter my mine An so i took & Sot it to wut I call a nussry rime. I hev made sum onnable Gentlemun speak that dident speak in a Kind uv Poetikul lie sense the seeson is dreffle backerd up This way  
ewers as ushul  
HOSEA BIGLOW.

“HERE we stan' on the Constitution, by thunder!  
It's a fact o' wich ther's bushils o' proofs;  
Fer how could we trample on't so, I wonder,  
Ef 't worn't thet it's ollers under our hoofs?”  
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;  
“Human rights haint no more  
Right to come on this floor,  
No more 'n the man in the moon,”  
sez he.

- "The North haint no kind o' bisness  
 with nothin',  
 An' you 've no idee how much bother  
 it saves;  
 We aint none riled by their frettin' an'  
 frothin',  
 We're *used* to layin' the string on our  
 slaves,"  
 Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—  
 Sez Mister Foote,  
 "I should like to shoot  
 The holl gang, by the gret horn  
 spoon !" sez he.
- "Freedom's Keystone is Slavery, thet  
 ther 's no doubt on,  
 It 's sutthin' thet 's—wha' d' ye call  
 it?—divine,—  
 An' the slaves thet we ollers *make* the  
 most out on  
 Air them north o' Mason an' Dixon's  
 line,"  
 Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—  
 "Fer all thet," sez Mangum,  
 "'T would be better to hang 'em,  
 An' so git red on 'em soon," sez he.
- "The mass ough' to labor an' we lay on  
 soffies,  
 Thet 's the reason I want to spread  
 Freedom's aree ;  
 It puts all the cunningest on us in office,  
 An' reelises our Maker's orig'nal  
 idee,"  
 Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—  
 "Thet 's ez plain," sez Cass,  
 "Ez thet some one 's an ass,  
 It 's ez clear ez the sun is at noon,"  
 sez he.
- "Now don't go to say I'm the friend of  
 oppression,  
 But keep all your spare breath fer  
 coolin' your broth,  
 Fer I ollers hev strove (at least thet 's  
 my impression)  
 To make cussed free with the rights o'  
 the North,"  
 Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—  
 "Yes," sez Davis o' Miss.,  
 "The perfection o' bliss  
 Is in skinnin' thet same old coon,"  
 sez he.
- "Slavery 's a thing thet depends on  
 complexion,  
 It 's God's law thet fetters on black  
 skins don't chafe;
- Ef brains wuz to settle it (horrid reflec-  
 tion !)  
 Wich of our onnable body 'd be safe?"  
 Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—  
 Sez Mister Hannegan,  
 Afore he began agin,  
 "Thet exception is quite opper-  
 toon," sez he.
- "Gen'le Cass, Sir, you need n't be  
 twitchin' your collar,  
 Your merit 's quite clear by the dut  
 on your knees,  
 At the North we don't make no distinc-  
 tions o' color ;  
 You can all take a lick at our shoee  
 wen you please,"  
 Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—  
 Sez Mister Jarnagin,  
 "They wunt hev to larn agin,  
 They all on 'em know the old toon,"  
 sez he.
- "The slavery question aint no ways be-  
 wilderin'.  
 North an' South hev one int'rest, it 's  
 plain to a glance ;  
 No'thern men, like us patriarchs, don't  
 sell their childrin,  
 But they *du* sell themselves, ef they  
 git a good chance,"  
 Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—  
 Sez Atherton here,  
 "This is gittin' severe,  
 I wish I could dive like a loon," sez  
 he.
- "It 'll break up the Union, this talk  
 about freedom,  
 An' your fact'ry gals (soon ez we split)  
 'll make head,  
 An' gittin' some Miss chief or other to  
 lead 'em,  
 'll go to work raisin' permiscocooze  
 Ned,"  
 Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—  
 "Yes, the North," sez Colquitt,  
 "Ef we Southeners all quit,  
 Would go down like a busted bal-  
 loon," sez he.
- "Jest look wut is doin', wut annyky 's  
 brewin'  
 In the beautiful clime o' the olive an'  
 vine,  
 All the wise aristoxty 's a tumblin' to ruin,  
 An' the sankylots drorin' an' drinkin'  
 their wine,"

Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—

“ Yes,” sez Johnson, “ in France  
They ’re beginnin’ to dance  
Beëlzebub’s own rigadoodn,” sez he.

“ The South ’s safe enough, it don’t feel  
a mite skeery,  
Our slaves in their darkness an’ dut  
air tu blest  
Not to welcome with proud hallylugers  
the ery

Wen our eagle kicks yourn from the  
nayntional nest,”

Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—

“ O,” sez Westcott o’ Florida,  
“ Wut treason is horrider  
Then our priv’leges tryin’ to proun?”  
sez he.

“ It’s ’coz they ’re so happy, thet, wen  
crazy sarpints

Stick their nose in our bizness, we git  
so darned riled ;

We think it’s our dooty to give pooty  
sharp hints,

Thet the last crumb of Edin on airth  
sha’ n’t be spiled,”

Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—

“ Ah,” sez Dixon H. Lewis,

“ It perfectly true is  
Thet slavery’s airth’s grettest boon,”  
sez he.

[It was said of old time, that riches have wings ; and, though this be not applicable in a literal strictness to the wealth of our patriarchal brethren of the South, yet it is clear that their possessions have legs, and an unaccountable propensity for using them in a northerly direction. I marvel that the grand jury of Washington did not find a true bill against the North Star for aiding and abetting Drayton and Sayres. It would have been quite of a piece with the intelligence displayed by the South on other questions connected with slavery. I think that no ship of state was ever freighted with a more veritable Jonah than is this same domestic institution of ours. Mephistopheles himself could not feign so bitterly, so satirically sad a sight as this of three millions of human beings crushed beyond help or hope by this one mighty argument. — *Our fathers knew no better!* Nevertheless, it is the unavoidable destiny of Jonahs to be cast overboard sooner or later. Or shall we try the experiment of hiding our Jonah in a safe place, that none may lay hands on him to make jetsam of him? Let us, then, with equal forethought and wisdom, lash ourselves to the anchor, and await, in pious confidence, the certain result. Perhaps our suspicious passenger is no Jonah after all, being black. For it is well known that a superintending Providence made a kind of sandwich of Ham and his descendants, to be devoured by the Caucasian race.

In God’s name, let all, who hear nearer and nearer the hungry moan of the storm and the growl of the breakers, speak out! But, alas! we have no right to interfere. If a man pluck an apple of mine, he shall be in danger of the justice ; but if he steal my brother, I must be silent. Who says this? Our Constitution, consecrated by the callous consuetude of sixty years, and grasped in triumphant argument by the left hand of him whose right hand clutches the clotted slave-whip. Justice, venerable with the undethronable majesty of countless æons, says, — SPEAK! The Past, wise with the sorrows and desolations of ages, from amid her shattered fanes and wolf-housing palaces, echoes, — SPEAK! Nature, through her thousand trumpets of freedom, her stars, her sunrises, her seas, her winds, her cataracts, her mountains blue with cloudy pines, blows jubilant encouragement, and cries, — SPEAK! From the soul’s trembling abysses the still, small voice not vaguely murmurs, — SPEAK! But, alas! the Constitution and the Honorable Mr. Bagowind, M. C., say — BE DUMB!

It occurs to me to suggest, as a topic of inquiry in this connection, whether, on that momentous occasion when the goats and the sheep shall be parted, the Constitution and the Honorable Mr. Bagowind, M. C., will be expected to take their places on the left as our hired vicars.

*Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?  
Quem patronum rogaturus?*

There is a point where toleration sinks into sheer baseness and poltroonery. The toleration of the worst leads us to look on what is barely better as good enough, and to worship what is only moderately good. Woe to that man, or that nation, to whom mediocrity has become an ideal!

Has our experiment of self-government succeeded, if it barely manage to *rub and go*? Here, now, is a piece of barbarism which Christ and the nineteenth century say shall cease, and which Messrs. Smith, Brown, and others say shall *not* cease. I would by no means deny the eminent respectability of these gentlemen, but I confess, that, in such a wrestling-match, I cannot help having my fears for them.

*Discite justitiam, moniti, et non temneris divos.*  
H. W.]

## No. VI.

### THE PIOUS EDITOR’S CREED.

[AT the special instance of Mr. Biglow, I preface the following satire with an extract from a sermon preached during the past summer, from Ezekiel xxxiv. 2: “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel.” Since the Sabbath on which this discourse was delivered, the editor of the “Jaalam Independent Blunderbuss” has unaccountably absented himself from our house of worship.

“I know of no so responsible position as that of the public journalist. The editor of our day bears the same relation to his time that the clerk bore to the age before the invention of



printing. Indeed, the position which he holds is that which the clergyman should hold even now. But the clergyman chooses to walk off to the extreme edge of the world, and to throw such seed as he has clear over into that darkness which he calls the Next Life. As if next did not mean nearest, and as if any life were nearer than that which immediately presents one which boils and eddies all around him at the caucus, the ratification meeting, and the polls! Who taught him to exhort men to prepare for eternity, as for some future era of which the present forms no integral part? The furrow which Time is even now turning runs through the Everlasting, and in that must he plant, or nowhere. Yet he would fain believe and teach that we are going to have more of eternity than we have now. This going of his is like that of the auctioneer, on which *gone* follows before we have made up our minds to bid,—in which manner, not three months back, I lost an excellent copy of Chappelow on Job. So it has come to pass that the preacher, instead of being a living force, has faded into an emblematic figure at christenings, weddings, and funerals. Or, if he exercise any other function, it is as keeper and feeder of certain theologic dogmas, which, when occasion offers, he unkennels with a *staboy!* 'to bark and bite as 't is their nature to,' whence that reproach of *odium theologicum* has arisen.

"Meanwhile, see what a pulpit the editor mounts daily, sometimes with a congregation of fifty thousand within reach of his voice, and never so much as a nodder, even, among them! And from what a Bible can he choose his text,—a Bible which needs no translation, and which no priestcraft can shut and clasp from the laity,—the open volume of the world, upon which, with a pen of sunshine or destroying fire, the inspired Present is even now writing the annals of God! Methinks the editor who should understand his calling, and be equal thereto, would truly deserve that title of *πομπήν λαών*, which Homer bestows upon princes. He would be the Moses of our nineteenth century; and whereas the old Sinai, silent now, is but a common mountain stared at by the elegant tourist and crawled over by the hammering geologist, he must find his tables of the new law here among factories and cities in this Wilderness of Sin (Numbers xxxlii. 12) called Progress of Civilization, and be the captain of our Exodus into the Canaan of a truer social order.

"Nevertheless, our editor will not come so far within even the shadow of Sinai as Mahomet did, but chooses rather to construe Moses by Joe Smith. He takes up the crook, not that the sheep may be fed, but that he may never want a warm woollen suit and a joint of mutton.

*Immemor, O, fidei, pecorumque oblite tuorum!*

For which reason I would derive the name editor not so much from *edo*, to publish, as from *edo*, to eat, that being the peculiar profession to which he esteems himself called. He blows up the flames of political discord for no other occasion than that he may thereby handily boil his own pot. I believe there are two thousand of these mutton-loving shepherds in the United States, and of these, how many have even the dimmest perception of their immense power,

and the duties consequent thereon? Here and there, haply, one. Nine hundred and ninety-nine labor to impress upon the people the great principles of *Tweedledum*, and other nine hundred and ninety-nine preach with equal earnestness the gospel according to *Tweedledee*."—H. W.]

I DU believe in Freedom's cause,  
Ez fur away ez Payris is;  
I love to see her stick her claws  
In them infernal Phayrisees;  
It 's wal enough agin a king  
To dror resolves an' triggers,—  
But libbaty 's a kind o' thing  
Thet don't agree with niggers.

I du believe the people want  
A tax on teas an' coffees,  
Thet nothin' aint extravaygunt,—  
Purvidin' I 'm in office;  
Fer I hev loved my country sence  
My eye-teeth filled their sockets,  
An' Uncle Sam I reverence,  
Partic'larly his pockets.

I du believe in any plan  
O' levyin' the texes,  
Ez long ez, like a lumberman,  
I git jest wut I axes;  
I go free-trade thru thick an' thin,  
Because it kind o' rouses  
The folks to vote,—an' keeps us in  
Our quiet custom-houses.

I du believe it 's wise an' good  
To sen' out furrin missions,  
Thet is, on sartin understood  
An' orthydox conditions;—  
I mean nine thousan' dolls. per ann.,  
Nine thousan' more fer outfit,  
An' me to recommend a man  
The place 'ould jest about fit.

I du believe in special ways  
O' prayin' an' convartin';  
The bread comes back in many days,  
An' buttered, tu, fer sartin;  
I mean in preyin' till one busts  
On wut the party chooses,  
An' in convartin' public trusts  
To very privit uses.

I du believe hard coin the stuff  
Fer 'lectioneers to spout on;  
The people 's ollers soft enough  
To make hard money out on;  
Dear Uncle Sam pervides fer his,  
An' gives a good-sized junk to all,—

I don't care *how* hard money is,  
Ez long ez mine 's paid punctooal.

I du believe with all my soul  
In the gret Press's freedom,  
To pint the people to the goal  
An' in the traces lead 'em;  
Palsied the arm that forges yokes  
At my fat contracts squintin',  
An' withered be the nose that pokes  
Inter the gov'ment printin'!

I du believe thet I should give  
Wut 's his'n unto Cæsar,  
Fer it 's by him I move an' live,  
Frum him my bread an' cheese air;  
I du believe thet all o' me  
Doth bear his superscription, —  
Will, conscience, honor, honesty,  
An' thins o' thet description.

I du believe in prayer an' praise  
To him that hez the grantin'  
O' jobs, — in every thin' thet pays,  
But most of all in CANTIN';  
This doth my cup with marcies fill,  
This lays all thought o' sin to rest, —  
I *don't* believe in princerule,  
But O, I *du* in interest.

I du believe in bein' this  
Or thet, ez it may happen  
One way or t' other hendiest is  
To ketch the people nappin';  
It aint by princerples nor men  
My preudent course is steadied, —  
I scent wich pays the best, an' then  
Go into it baldheaded.

I du believe thet holdin' slaves  
Comes nat'ral to a Presidnt,  
Let 'lone the rowdedow it saves  
To hev a wal-broke precedunt;  
Fer any office, small or gret,  
I could n't ax with no face,  
'thout I 'd ben, thru dry an' wet,  
Th' unrizzest kind o' doughface.

I du believe wutever trash  
'll keep the people in blindness, —  
Thet we the Mexicuns can thrash  
Right inter brotherly kindness,  
Thet bombshells, grape, an' powder 'n'  
ball  
Air good-will's strongest magnets,  
Thet peace, to make it stick at all,  
Must be druv in with bagnets.

In short, I firmly du believe  
In Humbug generally,  
Fer it 's a thing thet I perceive  
To hev a solid vally;  
This heth my faithful shepherd ban,  
In pasturs sweet heth led me,  
An' this 'll keep the people green  
To feed ez they hev fed me.

[I subjoin here another passage from my before-mentioned discourse.

"Wonderful, to him that has eyes to see it rightly, is the newspaper. To me, for example, sitting on the critical front bench of the pit, in my study here in Jaalam, the advent of my weekly journal is as that of a strolling theatre, or rather of a puppet-show, on whose stage, narrow as it is, the tragedy, comedy, and farce of life are played in little. Behold the whole huge earth sent to me hebdomadally in a brown-paper wrapper!

"Hither, to my obscure corner, by wind or steam, on horseback or dromedary-back, in the pouch of the Indian runner, or clicking over the magnetic wires, troop all the famous performers from the four quarters of the globe. Looked at from a point of criticism, tiny puppets they seem all, as the editor sets up his booth upon my desk and officiates as showman. Now I can truly see how little and transitory is life. The earth appears almost as a drop of vinegar, on which the solar microscope of the imagination must be brought to bear in order to make out anything distinctly. That animalcule there, in the pea-jacket, is Louis Philippe, just landed on the coast of England. That other, in the gray surtout and cocked hat, is Napoleon Bonaparte Smith, assuring France that she need apprehend no interference from him in the present alarming juncture. At that spot, where you seem to see a speck of something in motion, is an immense mass-meeting. Look sharper, and you will see a mite brandishing his mandibles in an excited manner. That is the great Mr. Soandso, defining his position amid tumultuous and irrepressible cheers. That infinitesimal creature, upon whom some score of others, as minute as he, are gazing in open-mouthed admiration, is a famous philosopher, expounding to a select audience their capacity for the Infinite. That scarce discernible pufflet of smoke and dust is a revolution. That speck there is a reformer, just arranging the lever with which he is to move the world. And lo, there creeps forward the shadow of a skeleton that blows one breath between its grinning teeth, and all our distinguished actors are whisked off the slippery stage into the dark Beyond.

"Yes, the little show-box has its solemn suggestions. Now and then we catch a glimpse of a grim old man, who lays down a scythe and hour-glass in the corner while he shifts the scenes. There, too, in the dim background, a weird shape is ever delving. Sometimes he leans upon his mattock, and gazes, as a coach whirrs by, bearing the newly married on their wedding jaunt, or glances carelessly at a babe brought home from christening. Suddenly (for the scene grows larger and larger as we look) a

bony hand snatches back a performer in the midst of his part, and him, whom yesterday two infinities (past and future) would not suffice, a handful of dust is enough to cover and silence forever. Nay, we see the same fleshless fingers opening to clutch the showman himself, and guess, not without a shudder, that they are lying in wait for spectator also.

"Think of it: for three dollars a year I buy a season-ticket to this great Globe Theatre, for which God would write the dramas (only that we like farces, spectacles, and the tragedies of Apollony better), whose scene-shifter is Time, and whose curtain is rung down by Death.

"Such thoughts will occur to me sometimes as I am tearing off the wrapper of my newspaper. Then suddenly that otherwise too often vacant sheet becomes invested for me with a strange kind of awe. Look! deaths and marriages, notices of inventions, discoveries, and books, lists of promotions, of killed, wounded, and missing, news of fires, accidents, of sudden wealth and as sudden poverty:—I hold in my hand the ends of myriad invisible electric conductors, along which tremble the joys, sorrows, wrongs, triumphs, hopes, and despairs of as many men and women everywhere. So that upon that mood of mind which seems to isolate me from mankind as a spectator of their puppet-pranks, another supervenes, in which I feel that I, too, unknown and unheard of, am yet of some import to my fellows. For, through my newspaper here, do not families take pains to send me, an entire stranger, news of a death among them? Are not here two who would have me know of their marriage? And, strangest of all, is not this singular person anxious to have me informed that he has received a fresh supply of Dimitry Bruisgins? But to none of us does the Present continue miraculous (even if for a moment discerned as such). We glance carelessly at the sunrise, and get used to Orion and the Pleiades. The wonder wears off, and to-morrow this sheet (Acts x. 11, 12), in which a vision was let down to me from Heaven, shall be the wrappage to a bar of soap or the platter for a beggar's broken victuals."—H. W.]

## No. VII.

### A LETTER

FROM A CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY  
IN ANSWER TO SUTTIN QUESTIONS PRO-  
POSED BY MR. HOSEA BIGLOW, INCLOSED  
IN A NOTE FROM MR. BIGLOW TO S. H.  
GAY, ESQ., EDITOR OF THE NATIONAL  
ANTISLAVERY STANDARD.

[CURIOSITY may be said to be the quality which pre-eminently distinguishes and segregates man from the lower animals. As we trace the scale of animated nature downward, we find this faculty (as it may truly be called) of the mind diminished in the savage, and well-nigh extinct in the brute. The first object which civilized man proposes to himself I take to be the finding out whatsoever he can concerning his neighbors. *Nihil humanum a me alienum*

*puto*; I am curious about even John Smith. The desire next in strength to this (an opposite pole, indeed, of the same magnet) is that of communicating the unintelligence we have carefully picked up.

Men in general may be divided into the inquisitive and the communicative. To the first class belong Peeping Toms, eaves-droppers, navel-contemplating Brahmins, metaphysicians, travellers, Empedocleses, metaps, the various societies for promoting Rhinotism, Columbases, Yankees, discoverers, and men of science, who present themselves to the mind as so many marks of interrogation wandering up and down the world, or sitting in studies and laboratories. The second class I should again subdivide into four. In the first subdivision I would rank those who have an itch to tell us about themselves,—as keepers of diaries, insignificant persons generally, Montaignes, Horace Walpoles, autobiographers, poets. The second includes those who are anxious to impart information concerning other people,—as historians, barbers, and such. To the third belong those who labor to give us intelligence about nothing at all,—as novelists, political orators, the large majority of authors, preachers, lecturers, and the like. In the fourth come those who are communicative from motives of public benevolence,—as finders of mares'-nests and bringers of ill news. Each of us two-legged fowls without feathers embraces all these subdivisions in himself to a greater or less degree, for none of us so much as lays an egg, or incubates a chalk one, but straightway the whole barnyard shall know it by our cackle or our cluck. *Omnibus hoc vitium est*. There are different grades in these classes. One will turn his telescope toward a back-yard, another toward Uranus; one will tell you that he dined with Smith, another that he supped with Plato. In one particular, all men may be considered as belonging to the first grand division, inasmuch as they all seem equally desirous of discovering the mote in their neighbor's eye.

To one or another of these species every human being may safely be referred. I think it beyond a peradventure that Jonah prosecuted some inquiries into the digestive apparatus of whales, and that Noah sealed up a letter in an empty bottle, that news in regard to him might not be wanting in case of the worst. They had else been super or subter human. I conceive, also, that, as there are certain persons who continually peep and pry at the keyhole of that mysterious door through which, sooner or later, we all make our exits, so there are doubtless ghosts fidgeting and fretting on the other side of it, because they have no means of conveying back to this world the scraps of news they have picked up in that. For there is an answer ready somewhere to every question, the great law of *give and take* runs through all nature, and if we see a hook, we may be sure that an eye is waiting for it. I read in every face I meet a standing advertisement of information wanted in regard to A. B., or that the friends of C. D. can hear something to his disadvantage by application to such a one.

It was to gratify the two great passions of asking and answering that epistolary correspondence was first invented. Letters (for by



this usurped title epistles are now commonly known) are of several kinds. First, there are those which are not letters at all, — as letters-patent, letters dimissory, letters enclosing bills, letters of administration, Pliny's letters, letters of diplomacy, of Cato, of Mentor, of Lords Lyttelton, Chesterfield, and Orrery, of Jacob Behnen, Seneca (whom St. Jerome includes in his list of sacred writers), letters from abroad, from sons in college to their fathers, letters of marque, and letters generally, which are in no wise letters of mark. Second, are real letters, such as those of Gray, Cowper, Walpole, Howell, Lamb, D. Y., the first letters from children (printed in staggering capitals), Letters from New York, letters of credit, and others, interesting for the sake of the writer or the thing written. I have read also letters from Europe by a gentleman named Pinto, containing some curious gossip, and which I hope to see collected for the benefit of the curious. There are, besides, letters addressed to posterity, — as epitaphs, for example, written for their own monuments by monarchs, whereby we have lately become possessed of the names of several great conquerors and kings of kings, hitherto unheard of and still unpronounceable, but valuable to the student of the entirely dark ages. The letter of our Saviour to King Abgarus, that which St. Peter sent to King Pepin in the year of grace 755, that of the Virgin to the magistrates of Messina, that of the Sanhedrim of Toledo to Annas and Caiaphas, A. D. 35, that of Galeazzo Sforza's spirit to his brother Lodovico, that of St. Gregory Thaumaturgus to the D—l, and that of this last-mentioned active police-magistrate to a nun of Girgenti, I would place in a class by themselves, as also the letters of candidates, concerning which I shall dilate more fully in a note at the end of the following poem. At present, *sat prata biberunt*. Only, concerning the shape of letters, they are all either square or oblong, to which general figures circular letters and round-robins also conform themselves. — H. W.]

DEER SIR its gut to be the fashun now to rite letters to the candid 8s and i wus chose at a publick Meetin in Jaalam to du wut wus nessary fur that town. i writ to 271 ginerals and gut ansers to 209. tha air called candid 8s but I don't see nothin candid about 'em. this here I wich I send wus thought satty's factory. I dunno as it's ushle to print Poscrips, but as all the ansers I got hed the saim, I sposed it wus best. times has gretly changed. Formaly to knock a man into a cocked hat wus to use him up, but now it ony gives him a chance fur the cheef madgustracy. — H. B.

DEAR SIR, — You wish to know my notions

On sartin pints thet rile the land ;  
There 's nothin' thet my natur so shuns  
Ez bein' mum or underhand ;  
I'm a straight-spoken kind o' creetur  
Thet blurts right out wut's in his  
head,

An ef I've one pecooler feetur,  
It is a nose thet wunt be led.

So, to begin at the beginnin'  
An' come direcly to the pint,  
I think the country 's underpinnin'  
Is some consid'ble out o' jint ;  
I aint agoin' to try your patience  
By tellin' who done this or thet,  
I don't make no insinooations,  
I jest let on I smell a rat.

Thet is, I mean, it seems to me so,  
But, ef the public think I 'm wrong,  
I wunt deny but wut I be so, —  
An', fact, it don't smell very strong ;  
My mind 's tu fair to lose its balance  
An' say wich party hez most sense ;  
There may be folks o' greater talence  
Thet can't set stiddier on the fence.

I 'm an eclectic ; ez to choosin'  
'Twixt this an' thet, I 'm plaguy  
lawth ;  
I leave a side thet looks like losin',  
But (wile there 's doubt) I stick to  
both ;  
I stan' upon the Constitution,  
Ez preudent statesmun say, who 've  
planned  
A way to git the most profusion  
O' chances ez to *wave* they 'll stand.

Ez fer the war, I go agin it, —  
I mean to say I kind o' du, —  
Thet is, I mean thet, bein' in it,  
The best way wuz to fight it thru ;  
Not but wut abstract war is horrid,  
I sign to thet with all my heart, —  
But civlyzation *doos* git forrid  
Sometimes upon a powder-cart.

About thet darned Proviso matter  
I never hed a grain o' doubt,  
Nor I aint one my sense to scatter  
So 'st no one could n't pick it out ;  
My love fer North an' South is equil,  
So I 'll jest answer plump an' frank,  
No matter wut may be the sequil, —  
Yes, Sir, I *am* agin a Bank.

Ez to the answerin' o' questions,  
I 'm an off ox at bein' druv,  
Though I aint one thet ary text shuns  
'll give our folks a helpin' shove ;  
Kind o' permiscuous I go it  
Fer the hoil country, an' the ground

I take, ez nigh ez I can show it,  
Is pooty gen'ally all round.

I don't appruve o' givin' pledges ;  
You 'd ough' to leave a feller free,  
An' not go knockin' out the wedges  
To ketch his fingers in the tree ;  
Pledges air awfle breachy cattle  
Thet preudunt farmers don't turn  
out, —

Ez long 'z the people git their rattle,  
Wut is there fer 'm to grout about ?

Ez to the slaves, there 's no confusion

In *my* idees consarmin' them, —  
I think they air an Institution,  
A sort of — yes, jest so, — ahem :

Do I own any ? Of my merit  
On thet pint you yourself may jedge ;  
All is, I never drink no sperit,  
Nor I haint never signed no pledge.

Ez to my princerples, I glory  
In hev'in' nothin' o' the sort ;  
I aint a Wig, I aint a Tory,  
I 'm jest a candidate, in short ;  
Thet 's fair an' square an' perpendicler,  
But, ef the Public cares a fig  
To hev me an' thin' in particler,  
Wy, I 'm a kind o' peri-Wig.

P. S.

Ez we 're a sort o' privateerin',  
O' course, you know, it 's sheer an'  
sheer,

An' there is sutthin' wuth your hearin'  
I 'll mention in *your* privit ear ;  
Ff you git *me* inside the White House,  
Your head wuth ile I 'll kin' o' 'nint  
By gittin' *you* inside the Light-house  
Down to the eend o' Jaalam Pint.

An' ez the North hez took to bustlin'  
At bein' scrouged from off the roost,  
I 'll tell ye wut 'll save all tusslin'  
An' give our side a harnsome boost, —  
Tell 'em thet on the Slavery question  
I 'm RIGHT, although to speak I 'm  
lawth ;

This gives you a safe pint to rest on,  
An' leaves me frontin' South by  
North.

[And now of epistles candidatal, which are  
of two kinds, — namely, letters of acceptance,  
and letters definitive of position. Our republic,  
on the eve of an election, may safely enough

be called a republic of letters. Epistolary composition becomes then an epidemic, which seizes one candidate after another, not seldom cutting short the thread of political life. It has come to such a pass, that a party dreads less the attacks of its opponents than a letter from its candidate. *Littera scripta manet*, and it will go hard if something bad cannot be made of it. General Harrison, it is well understood, was surrounded, during his candidacy, with the *cordon sanitaire* of a vigilance committee. No prisoner in Spielberg was ever more cautiously deprived of writing materials. The soot was scraped carefully from the chimney-places ; outposts of expert rifle-shooters rendered it sure death for any goose (who came clad in feathers) to approach within a certain limited distance of North Bend ; and all domestic fowls about the premises were reduced to the condition of Plato's original man. By these precautions the General was saved. *Parva componere magnis*, I remember, that, when party-spirit once ran high among my people, upon occasion of the choice of a new deacon, I, having my preferences, yet not caring too openly to express them, made use of an innocent fraud to bring about that result which I deemed most desirable. My stratagem was no other than the throwing a copy of the Complete Letter-Writer in the way of the candidate whom I wished to defeat. He caught the infection, and addressed a short note to his constituents, in which the opposite party detected so many and so grave improprieties (he had modelled it upon the letter of a young lady accepting a proposal of marriage), that he not only lost his election, but, falling under a suspicion of Sabellianism and I know not what (the widow Endive assured me that he was a Paralipomenon, to her certain knowledge), was forced to leave the town. Thus it is that the letter killeth.

The object which candidates propose to themselves in writing is to convey no meaning at all. And here is a quite unsuspected pitfall into which they successively plunge headlong. For it is precisely in such cryptographies that mankind are prone to seek for and find a wonderful amount and variety of significance. *Omne ignotum pro mirifico*. How do we admire at the antique world striving to crack those oracular nuts from Delphi, Hammon, and elsewhere, in only one of which can I so much as surmise that any kernel had ever lodged ; that, namely, wherein Apollo confessed that he was mortal. One Didymus is, moreover, related to have written six thousand books on the single subject of grammar, a topic rendered only more tenebriic by the labors of his successors, and which seems still to possess an attraction for authors in proportion as they can make nothing of it. A singular loadstone for theologians, also, is the Beast in the Apocalypse, whereof, in the course of my studies, I have noted two hundred and three several interpretations, each lethiferal to all the rest. *Non nostrum est tentas componere lites*, yet I have myself ventured upon a two hundred and fourth, which I embodied in a discourse preached on occasion of the demise of the late usurper, Napoleon Bonaparte, and which quieted, in a large measure, the minds of my people. It is true that my views on this important point were ardently controverted by Mr. Shearjashub Holden, the



then preceptor of our academy, and in other particulars a very deserving and sensible young man, though possessing a somewhat limited knowledge of the Greek tongue. But his heresy struck down no deep root, and, he having been lately removed by the hand of Providence, I had the satisfaction of reaffirming my cherished sentiments in a sermon preached upon the Lord's day immediately succeeding his funeral. This might seem like taking an unfair advantage, did I not add that he had made provision in his last will (being celibate) for the publication of a posthumous tractate in support of his own dangerous opinions.

I know of nothing in our modern times which approaches so nearly to the ancient oracle as the letter of a Presidential candidate. Now, among the Greeks, the eating of beans was strictly forbidden to all such as had it in mind to consult those expert amphibologists, and this same prohibition on the part of Pythagoras to his disciples is understood to imply an abstinence from politics, beans having been used as ballots. That other explication, *quod videlicet sensus eo cibo obtundi existimaret*, though supported *pugnīs et calicibus* by many of the learned, and not wanting the countenance of Cicero, is confuted by the larger experience of New England. On the whole, I think it safer to apply here the rule of interpretation which now generally obtains in regard to antique cosmogonies, myths, fables, proverbial expressions, and knotty points generally, which is, to find a common-sense meaning, and then select whatever can be imagined the most opposite thereto. In this way we arrive at the conclusion, that the Greeks objected to the questioning of candidates. And very properly, if, as I conceive, the chief point be not to discover what a person in that position is, or what he will do, but whether he can be elected. *Vos exemplaria Græca nocturna versate manu, versate diurna.*

But, since an imitation of the Greeks in this particular (the asking of questions being one chief privilege of freemen) is hardly to be hoped for, and our candidates will answer, whether they are questioned or not, I would recommend that these ante-electionary dialogues should be carried on by symbols, as were the diplomatic correspondences of the Scythians and Macrobii, or confined to the language of signs, like the famous interview of Panurge and Goatsnose. A candidate might then convey a suitable reply to all committees of inquiry by closing one eye, or by presenting them with a phial of Egyptian darkness to be speculated upon by their respective constituencies. These answers would be susceptible of whatever retrospective construction the exigencies of the political campaign might seem to demand, and the candidate could take his position on either side of the fence with entire consistency. Or, if letters must be written, profitable use might be made of the Dighton rock hieroglyphic or the cuneiform script, every fresh decipherer of which is enabled to educe a different meaning, whereby a sculptured stone or two supplies us, and will probably continue to supply posterity, with a very vast and various body of authentic history. For even the briefest epistle in the ordinary shirography is dangerous. There is scarce any

style so compressed that superfluous words may not be detected in it. A severe critic might curtail that famous brevity of Cæsar's by two thirds, drawing his pen through the supererogatory *veni* and *vidi*. Perhaps, after all, the surest footing of hope is to be found in the rapidly increasing tendency to demand less and less of qualification in candidates. Already have statesmanship, experience, and the possession (nay, the profession, even) of principles been rejected as superfluous, and may not the patriot reasonably hope that the ability to write will follow? At present, there may be death in pot-hooks as well as pots, the loop of a letter may suffice for a bow-string, and all the dreadful heresies of Antislavery may lurk in a flourish. —H. W.]

## NO. VIII.

### A SECOND LETTER FROM B. SAWIN, ESQ.

[In the following epistle, we behold Mr. Sawin returning, a *miles emeritus*, to the bosom of his family. *Quantum mutatus!* The good Father of us all had doubtless intrusted to the keeping of this child of his certain faculties of a constructive kind. He had put in him a share of that vital force, the nicest economy of every minute atom of which is necessary to the perfect development of Humanity. He had given him a brain and heart, and so had equipped his soul with the two strong wings of knowledge and love, whereby it can mount to hang its nest under the eaves of heaven. And this child, so dowered, he had intrusted to the keeping of his vicar, the State. How stands the account of that stewardship? The State, or Society (call her by what name you will), had taken no manner of thow. At of him till she saw him swept out into the street, the pitiful leavings of last night's deauch, with cigarends, lemon-parings, tobacco-quids, slops, vile stanches, and the whole loathsome next-morning of the bar-room,—an own child of the Almighty God! I remember him as he was brought to be christened, a ruddy, rugged babe; and now there he wallows, reeking, seething,—the dead corpse, not of a man, but of a soul,—a putrefying lump, horrible for the life that is in it. Comes the wind of heaven, that good Samaritan, and parts the hair upon his forehead, nor is too nice to kiss those parched, cracked lips; the morning opens upon him her eyes full of pitying sunshine, the sky yearns down to him,—and there he lies fermenting. O sleep! let me not profane thy holy name by calling that stertorous unconsciousness a slumber! By and by comes along the State, God's vicar. Does she say,—“My poor, forlorn foster-child! Behold here a force which I will make dig and plant and build for me”? Not so, but,—“Here is a recruit ready-made to my hand, a piece of destroying energy lying unprofitably idle.” So she claps an ugly gray suit on him, puts a musket in his grasp, and sends him off, with Governatorial and other godspeeds, to do duty as a destroyer.

I made one of the crowd at the last Mechan-



les' Fair, and, with the rest, stood gazing in wonder at a perfect machine, with its soul of fire, its boiler-heart that sent the hot blood pulsing along the iron arteries, and its thews of steel. And while I was admiring the adaptation of means to end, the harmonious involutions of contrivance, and the never-bewildered complexity, I saw a grimed and greasy fellow, the imperious engine's lackey and drudge, whose sole office was to let fall, at intervals, a drop or two of oil upon a certain joint. Then my soul said within me, See there a piece of mechanism to which that other you marvel at is but as the rude first effort of a child,—a force which not merely suffices to set a few wheels in motion, but which can send an impulse all through the infinite future,—a contrivance, not for turning out pins, or stitching buttonholes, but for making Hamlets and Lears. And yet this thing of iron shall be housed, waited on, guarded from rust and dust, and it shall be a crime but so much as to scratch it with a pin ; while the other, with its fire of God in it, shall be buffeted hither and thither, and finally sent carefully a thousand miles to be the target for a Mexican cannon-ball. Unthrifty Mother State! My heart burned within me for pity and indignation, and I renewed this covenant with my own soul,—*In alitis mansuetus ero, at, in blasphemis contra Christum, non ita.*—H. W.]

I SPOSE you wonder ware I be ; I can't tell, fer the soul o' me,  
 Exacly ware I be myself, — meanin' by that the holl o' me.  
 Wen I left hum, I hed two legs, an' they worn't bad ones neither,  
 (The scaliest trick they ever played wuz bringin' on me hither,)  
 Now one on 'em 's I dunno ware ; — they thought I wuz adyin',  
 An' sawed it off because they said 't wuz kin' o' mortifyin' ;  
 I 'm willin' to believe it wuz, an' yit I don't see, nuther,  
 Wy one shoud take to feelin' cheap a minnit sooner 'n t' other,  
 Sence both wuz equilly to blame ; but things is ez they be ;  
 It took on so they took it off, an' that 's enough fer me :  
 There 's one good thing, though, to be said about my wooden new one, —  
 The liquor can't git into it ez 't used to in the true one ;  
 So it saves drink ; an' then, besides, a feller could n't beg  
 A gretter blessin' then to hev one ollers sober peg ;  
 It 's true a chap 's in want o' two fer folle-  
 rin' a drum,  
 But all the march I 'm up to now is jest to Kingdom Come.

I 've lost one eye, but that 's a loss it 's easy to supply  
 Out o' the glory that I 've gut, fer that is all my eye ;  
 An' one is big enough, I guess, by diligently usin' it,  
 To see all I shall ever git by way o' pay fer losin' it ;  
 Off'cers I notice, who git paid fer all our thumps an' kickins,  
 Du wal by keepin' single eyes arter the fattest pickins ;  
 So, ez the eye 's put fairly out, I 'll larn to go without it,  
 An' not allow *myself* to be no gret put out about it.  
 Now, le' me see, thet is n't all ; I used, 'fore leavin' Jaalam,  
 To count things on my finger-eends, but sutthin' seems to ail 'em :  
 Ware 's my left hand ? O, darn it, yes, I recollect wut 's come on 't ;  
 I haint no left arm but my right, an' thet 's gut jest a thumb on 't ;  
 It aint so hendy ez it wuz to callate a sum on 't.  
 I 've hed some ribs broke, — six (I bl'ieve), — I haint kep' no account on 'em ;  
 Wen pensions git to be the talk, I 'll settle the amount on 'em.  
 An' now I 'm speakin' about ribs, it kin' o' brings to mind  
 One thet I could n't never break, — the one I lef' behind ;  
 Ef you should see her, jest clear out the spout o' your invention  
 An' pour the longest sweetnin' in about an annoal pension,  
 An' kin' o' hint (in case, you know, the critter should refuse to be  
 Consoled) I aint so 'xpensive now to keep ez wut I used to be ;  
 There 's one arm less, ditto one eye, an' then the leg thet 's wooden  
 Can be took off an' sot away wenever ther 's a puddin'.  
 I spose you think I 'm comin' back ez opperlunt ez thunder,  
 With shiploads o' gold images an' varus sorts o' plunder ;  
 Wal, 'fore I vullintered, I thought this country wuz a sort o'  
 Canaan, a reg'lar Promised Land flowin' with rum an' water,  
 Ware propaty growed up like timq, without no cultivation,

An' gold wuz dug ez taters be among our  
 Yankee nation,  
 Ware nateral advantages were puffily  
 amazin',  
 Ware every rock there wuz about with  
 precious stuns wuz blazin',  
 Ware mill-sites filled the country up ez  
 thick ez you could cram em,  
 An' desput rivers run about a beggin'  
 folks to dam 'em ;  
 Then there were meetinhouses, tu,  
 chockful o' gold an' silver  
 Thet you could take, an' no one could n't  
 hand ye in no bill fer ; —  
 Thet's wut I thought afore I went,  
 thet's wut them fellers told us  
 Thet stayed to hum an' speechified an'  
 to the buzzards sold us ;  
 I thought thet gold-mines could be gut  
 cheaper than Chiny asters,  
 An' see myself acomin' back like sixty  
 Jacob Astors ;  
 But sech ideas soon melted down an'  
 did n't leave a grease-spot ;  
 I vow my holl sheer o' the spiles would n't  
 come nigh a V spot ;  
 Although, most anywares we've ben,  
 you need n't break no locks,  
 Nor run no kin' o' risks, to fill your  
 pocket full o' rocks.  
 I 'xpect I mentioned in my last some o'  
 the nateral feturs  
 O' this all-fiered buggy hole in th' way  
 o' awfle creeturs,  
 But I fergut to name (new things to  
 speak on so abounded)  
 How one day you 'll most die o' thust,  
 an' 'fore the next git drowneded.  
 The clymit seems to me jest like a teap-  
 ot made o' pewter  
 Our Preudence hed, thet would n't pour  
 (all she could du) to suit her ;  
 Fust place the leaves 'ould choke the  
 spout, so 's not a drop 'ould dreen  
 out,  
 Then Prude 'ould tip an' tip an' tip, till  
 the holl kit bust clean out,  
 The kiver-hinge-pin bein' lost, tea-leaves  
 an' tea an' kiver  
 'ould all come down *kerswoosh* ! ez though  
 the dam bust in a river.  
 Jest so 't is here ; holl months there  
 aint a day o' rainy weather,  
 An' jest ez th' officers 'ould be a layin'  
 heads together  
 Ez t' how they 'd mix their drink at sech  
 a milingtary deepot, —

'T would pour ez though the lid wuz off  
 the everlastin' teapot.  
 The cons'quence is, thet I shall take,  
 wen I 'm allowed to leave here,  
 One piece o' propaty along, an' thet's  
 the shakin' fever ;  
 It's reggilar employment, though, an'  
 thet aint thought to harm one,  
 Nor 't aint so tiresome ez it wuz with  
 t' other leg an' arm on ;  
 An' it's a consolation, tu, although it  
 doos n't pay,  
 To hev it said you 're some gret shakes  
 in any kin' o' way.  
 'T worn't very long, I tell ye wut, I  
 thought o' fortin-makin', —  
 One day a reg'lar shiver-de-freeze, an'  
 next ez good ez bakin', —  
 One day abrin' in the sand, then  
 smoth'rin' in the meshes, —  
 Git up all sound, be put to bed a mess  
 o' hacks an' smashes.  
 But then, thinks I, at any rate there's  
 glory to be hed, —  
 Thet's an investment, arter all, thet  
 may n't turn out so bad ;  
 But somehow, wen we'd fit an' licked,  
 I ollers found the thanks  
 Gut kin' o' lodged afore they come ez  
 low down ez the ranks ;  
 The Gin'ral's gut the biggest sheer, the  
 Cunnles next, an' so on, —  
*We* never gut a blasted mite o' glory ez  
 I know on ;  
 An' spose we hed, I wonder how you 're  
 goin' to contrive its  
 Division so's to give a piece to twenty  
 thousand privits ;  
 Ef you should multiply by ten the por-  
 tion o' the brav'st one,  
 You would n't git more 'n half enough to  
 speak of on a grave-stun ;  
 We git the licks, — we 're jest the grist  
 thet 's put into War's hoppers ;  
 Leftenants is the lowest grade thet helps  
 pick up the coppers.  
 It may suit folks thet go agin a body  
 with a soul in 't,  
 An' aint contented with a hide without  
 a bagnet hole in 't ;  
 But glory is a kin' o' thing *I* sha' n't  
 pursue no furdur,  
 Coz thet 's the officers parquisite, —  
 yourn's on'y jest the murder.  
 Wal, arter I gin glory up, thinks I at  
 least there's one

Thing in the bills we aint hed yit, an'  
 thet's the GLORIOUS FUN ;  
 Ef once we git to Mexico, we fairly may  
 persume we  
 All day an' night shall revel in the halls  
 o' Montezumy.  
 I'll tell ye wut *my* revels wuz, an' see  
 how you would like 'em ;  
*We* never gut inside the hall : the nigh-  
 est ever *I* come  
 Wuz stan'in' sentry in the sun (an', fact,  
 it *seemed* a cent'ry)  
 A ketchin' smells o' biled an' roast thet  
 come out thru the entry,  
 An' hearin' ez I sweltered thru my  
 passes an' repasses,  
 A rat-tat-too o' knives an' forks, a  
 clinkty-clink o' glasses :  
 I can't tell off the bill o' fare the Gin-  
 rals hed inside ;  
 All I know is, thet out o' doors a pair  
 o' soles wuz fried,  
 An' not a hunderd miles away frum  
 ware this child wuz posted,  
 A Massachusetts citizen wuz baked an'  
 biled an' roasted ;  
 The on'y thing like revellin' thet ever  
 come to me  
 Wuz bein' routed out o' sleep by thet  
 darned revelee.

They say the quarrel 's settled now ; fer  
 my part I 've some doubt on 't,  
 't'll take more fish-skin than folks think  
 to take the rile clean out on 't ;  
 At any rate I 'm so used up I can't do  
 no more fightin',  
 The on'y chance thet 's left to me is polit-  
 ics an' writin' ;  
 Now, ez the people 's gut to hev a mil-  
 ingtary man,  
 An' I aint nothin' else jest now, I 've hit  
 upon a plan ;  
 The can'idatin' line, you know, 'ould  
 suit me to a T,  
 An' ef I lose, 't wunt hurt my ears to  
 lodge another flea ;  
 So I 'll set up ez can'idate fer any kin'  
 o' office,  
 (I mean fer any thet includes good easy-  
 cheers an' soffies ;  
 Fer ez tu runnin' fer a place ware work 's  
 the time o' day,  
 You know thet 's wut I never did, —  
 except the other way ;)  
 Ef it 's the Presidential cheer fer wich  
 I 'd better run,

Wut two legs anywares about could keep  
 up with my one ?  
 There aint no kin' o' quality in can'i-  
 dates, it 's said,  
 So useful ez a wooden leg, — except a  
 wooden head ;  
 There 's nothin' aint so poppylar — (wy,  
 it 's a perfect sin  
 To think wut Mexico hez paid fer Santy  
 Anny's pin ;) —  
 Then I haint gut no princerples, an',  
 sence I wuz knee-high,  
 I never *did* hev any gret, ez you can  
 testify ;  
 I 'm a decided peace-man, tu, an' go  
 agin the war, —  
 Fer now the holl on 't 's gone an' past,  
 wut is there to *go for* ?  
 Ef, wile you 're 'lectioneerin' round,  
 some curus chaps should beg  
 To know my views o' state affairs, jest  
 answer WOODEN LEG !  
 Ef they aint settisfied with thet, an' kin'  
 o' pry an' doubt  
 An' ax fer sutthin' deffynit, jest say  
 ONE EYE PUT OUT !  
 Thet kin' o' talk I guess you 'll find 'll  
 answer to a charm,  
 An' wen you 're druv tu nigh the wall,  
 hol' up my missin' arm ;  
 Ef they should nose round fer a pledge,  
 put on a vartuous look  
 An' tell 'em thet 's percisely wut I never  
 gin nor — took !

Then you can call me "Timbertoes," —  
 thet 's wut the people likes ;  
 Sutthin' combinin' morril truth with  
 phrases sech ez strikes ;  
 Some say the people 's fond o' this, or  
 thet, or wut you please, —  
 I tell ye wut the people want is jest cor-  
 rect idees ;  
 "Old Timbertoes," you see, 's a creed  
 it 's safe to be quite bold on,  
 There 's nothin' in 't the other side can  
 any ways git hold on ;  
 It 's a good tangible idee, a sutthin' to  
 embody  
 Thet valooable class o' men who look  
 thru brandy-toddy ;  
 It gives a Party Platform, tu, jest level  
 with the mind  
 Of all right-thinkin', honest folks thet  
 mean to go it blind ;  
 Then there air other good hooraws to  
 dror on ez you need 'em,



Sech ez the ONE-EYED SLARTERER, the BLOODY BIRDOFREDUM :

Them 's wut takes hold o' folks thet think, ez well ez o' the masses, An' makes you sartin o' the aid o' good men of all classes.

There 's one thing I 'm in doubt about; in order to be Presidunt,

It 's absolutely ne'ssary to be a Southern residunt;

The Constitution settles thet, an' also thet a feller

Must own a nigger o' some sort, jet black, or brown, or yellor.

Now I haint no objections agin particklar climes,

Nor agin ownin' anythin' (except the truth sometimes),

But, ez I haint no capital, up there among ye, maybe,

You might raise funds enough fer me to buy a low-priced baby,

An' then to suit the No'thern folks, who feel obleeged to say

They hate an' cuss the very thing they vote fer every day,

Say you 're assured I go full butt fer Libbaty's diffusion

An' made the purchis on'y jest to spite the Institootion;—

But, golly! there 's the currier's hoss upon the pavement pawin'!

I 'll be more 'xplicit in my next.

Yourn,  
BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN.

[We have now a tolerably fair chance of estimating how the balance-sheet stands between our returned volunteer and glory. Supposing the entries to be set down on both sides of the account in fractional parts of one hundred, we shall arrive at something like the following result:—

B. SAWIN, Esq., in account with (BLANK) GLORY.

Cr.	Dr.
By loss of one leg, 20	To one 675th three
“ do. one arm, 15	cheers in Faneuil Hall, . . . 80
“ do. four fingers, 5	“ do. do. on occasion of presentation of sword to Colonel Wright, 25
“ do. one eye . . . 10	“ one suit of gray clothes (ingeniously unbecoming) . . . . . 15
“ the breaking of six ribs, . . . 6	
“ having served under Colonel Cushing one month, . . . . 44	
100	70

Cr.	Dr.
Brought forward 100	Brought forward 70
	To musical entertainments (drum and fife . six months), . . . . 5
	“ one dinner after return . . . . . 1
	“ chance of pension, . . . . . 1
	“ privilege of drawing long-bow during rest of natural life, 23
100	100

It should appear that Mr. Sawin found the actual feast curiously the reverse of the bill of fare advertised in Faneuil Hall and other places. His primary object seems to have been the making of his fortune. *Querenda pecunia primum, virtus post nummos.* He hoisted sail for Eldorado, and shipwrecked on Point Tribulation. *Quid non mortalia pectora cogis, auri sacra fames?* The speculation has sometimes crossed my mind, in that dreary interval of drought which intervenes between quarterly stipendiary showers, that Providence, by the creation of a money-tree, might have simplified wonderfully the sometimes perplexing problem of human life. We read of bread-trees, the butter for which lies ready-churned in Irish bogs. Milk-trees we are assured of in South America, and stout Sir John Hawkins testifies to water-trees in the Canaries. Boot-trees bear abundantly in Lynn and elsewhere; and I have seen, in the entries of the wealthy, hat-trees with a fair show of fruit. A family-tree I once cultivated myself, and found therefrom but a scanty yield, and that quite tasteless and innoxious. Of trees bearing men we are not without examples; as those in the park of Louis the Eleventh of France. Who has forgotten, moreover, that olive-tree, growing in the Athenian's back-garden, with its strange uxorious crop, for the general propagation of which, as of a new and precious variety, the philosopher Diogenes, hitherto uninterested in arboriculture, was so zealous? In the *sylva* of our own Southern States, the females of my family have called my attention to the china-tree. Not to multiply examples, I will barely add to my list the birch-tree, in the smaller branches of which has been implanted so miraculous a virtue for communicating the Latin and Greek languages, and which may well, therefore, be classed among the trees producing necessities of life. — *venerabile donum fatalis virga.* That money-trees existed in the golden age there want not prevalent reasons for our believing. For does not the old proverb, when it asserts that money does not grow on every bush, imply *a fortiori* that there were certain bushes which did produce it? Again, there is another ancient saw to the effect that money is the root of all evil. From which two adages it may be safe to infer that the aforesaid species of tree first degenerated into a shrub, then absconded underground, and finally, in our iron age, vanished altogether. In favorable exposures it may be conjectured that

a specimen or two survived to a great age, as in the garden of the Hesperides; and, indeed, what else could that tree in the Sixth Æneid have been, with a branch whereof the Trojan hero procured admission to a territory, for the entering of which money is a surer passport than to a certain other more profitable and too foreign kingdom? Whether these speculations of mine have any force in them, or whether they will not rather, by most readers, be deemed impertinent to the matter in hand, is a question which I leave to the determination of an indulgent posterity. That there were, in more primitive and happier times, shops where money was sold, — and that, too, on credit and at a bargain, — I take to be matter of demonstration. For what but a dealer in this article was that Æolus who supplied Ulysses with motive-power for his fleet in bags? What that Ericus, King of Sweden, who is said to have kept the winds in his cap? what, in more recent times, those Lapland Nornas who traded in favorable breezes? All which will appear the more clearly when we consider, that, even to this day, *raising the wind* is proverbial for raising money, and that brokers and banks were invented by the Venetians at a later period.

And now for the improvement of this digression. I find a parallel to Mr. Sawin's fortune in an adventure of my own. For, shortly after I had first broached to myself the before-stated natural-historical and archeological theories, as I was passing, *hec negotia penitus mecum revolvens*, through one of the obscure suburbs of our New England metropolis, my eye was attracted by these words upon a sign-board, — CHEAP CASH-STORE. Here was at once the confirmation of my speculations, and the substance of my hopes. Here lingered the fragment of a happier past, or stretched out the first tremulous organic filament of a more fortunate future. Thus glowed the distant Mexico to the eyes of Sawin, as he looked through the dirty pane of the recruiting-office window, or speculated from the summit of that mirage-Pisgah which the imps of the bottle are so cunning to raise up. Already had my Alnaschar-fancy (even during that first half-believing glance) expended in various useful directions the funds to be obtained by pledging the manuscript of a proposed volume of discourses. Already did a clock ornament the tower of the Jaalam meeting-house, a gift appropriately, but modestly, commemorated in the parish and town records, both, for now many years, kept by myself. Already had my son Seneca completed his course at the University. Whether, for the moment, we may not be considered as actually lording it over those Barstias with the vicerealty of which Hope invests us, and whether we are ever so warmly housed as in our Spanish castles, would afford matter of argument. Enough that I found that sign-board to be no other than a bait to the trap of a decayed grocer. Nevertheless, I bought a pound of dates (getting short weight by reason of immense flights of harpy flies who pursued and lighted upon their prey even in the very scales), which purchase I made, not only with an eye to the little ones at home, but also as a figurative reproof of that too frequent habit of my mind, which, forgetting the due order of

chronology, will often persuade me that the happy sceptre of Saturn is stretched over this Astræa-forsaken nineteenth century.

Having glanced at the ledger of Glory under the title *Sawin, B.*, let us extend our investigations, and discover if that instructive volume does not contain some charges more personally interesting to ourselves. I think we should be more economical of our resources, did we thoroughly appreciate the fact, that, whenever Brother Jonathan seems to be thrusting his hand into his own pocket, he is, in fact, picking ours. I confess that the late *muck* which the country has been running has materially changed my views as to the best method of raising revenue. If, by means of direct taxation, the bills for every extraordinary outlay were brought under our immediate eye, so that, like thrifty housekeepers, we could see where and how fast the money was going, we should be less likely to commit extravagances. At present, these things are managed in such a hugger-mugger way, that we know not what we pay for; the poor man is charged as much as the rich; and, while we are saving and scrimping at the spigot, the government is drawing off at the bung. If we could know that a part of the money we expend for tea and coffee goes to buy powder and balls, and that it is Mexican blood which makes the clothes on our backs more costly, it would set some of us athinking. During the present fall, I have often pictured to myself a government official entering my study and handing me the following bill: —

WASHINGTON, Sept 30, 1848.

REV. HOMER WILBUR to Eric Samuel,

Dr.

To his share of work done in Mexico on partnership account, sundry jobs, as below.	
" killing, maiming, and wounding about 5,000 Mexicans, . . . . .	\$ 2.00
" slaughtering one woman carrying water to wounded, . . . . .	.10
" extra work on two different Sabbaths (one bombardment and one assault), whereby the Mexicans were prevented from defiling themselves with the idolatries of high mass, . . . . .	3.50
" throwing an especially fortunate and Protestant bombshell into the Cathedral at Vera Cruz, whereby several female Papists were slain at the altar, . . . . .	.50
" his proportion of cash paid for conquered territory, . . . . .	1.75
" do. do. for conquering do. . . . .	1.50
" manuring do. with new superior compost called "American Citizen," . . . . .	.50
" extending the area of freedom and Protestantism, . . . . .	.01
" glory, . . . . .	.01
	\$ 9.87

Immediate payment is requested.

N. B. Thankful for former favors, U. S. requests a continuance of patronage. Orders

executed with neatness and despatch. Terms as low as those of any other contractor for the same kind and style of work.

I can fancy the official answering my look of horror with, — "Yes, Sir, it looks like a high charge, Sir; but in these days slaughtering is slaughtering." Verily, I would that every one understood that it was: for it goes about obtaining money under the false pretence of being glory. For me, I have an imagination which plays me uncomfortable tricks. It happens to me sometimes to see a slaughterer on his way home from his day's work, and forthwith my imagination puts a cocked-hat upon his head and epaulettes upon his shoulders, and sets him up as a candidate for the Presidency. So, also, on a recent public occasion, as the place assigned to the "Reverend Clergy" is just behind that of "Officers of the Army and Navy" in processions, it was my fortune to be seated at the dinner-table over against one of these respectable persons. He was arrayed as (out of his own profession) only kings, court-officers, and footmen are in Europe, and Indians in America. Now what does my over-officious imagination but set to work upon him, strip him of his gay livery, and present him to me coatless, his trousers thrust into the tops of a pair of boots thick with clotted blood, and a basket on his arm out of which lolled a gore-smear'd axe, thereby destroying my relish for the temporal mercies upon the board before me! — H. W.)

## No. IX.

### A THIRD LETTER FROM B. SAWIN, ESQ.

[UPON the following letter slender comment will be needful. In what river Seiemnus has Mr. Sawin bathed, that he has become so swiftly oblivious of his former loves? From an ardent and (as befits a soldier) confident wooer of that coy bride, the popular favor, we see him subside of a sudden into the (I trust not jilted) Cincinnatus, returning to his plough with a goodly sized branch of willow in his hand; figuratively returning, however, to a figurative plough, and from no profound affection for that honored implement of husbandry (for which, indeed, Mr. Sawin never displayed any decided predilection), but in order to be gracefully summoned therefrom to more congenial labors. It would seem that the character of the ancient Dictator had become part of the recognized stock of our modern political comedy, though, as our term of office extends to a quadrennial length, the parallel is not so minutely exact as could be desired. It is sufficiently so, however, for purposes of scenic representation. An humble cottage (if built of logs, the better) forms the Arcadian background of the stage. This rustic paradise is labelled Ashland, Jalalam, North Bend, Marshfield, Kinderhook, or Bâton Rouge, as occasion demands. Before the door stands a something with one handle (the other painted in proper perspective), which represents, in happy ideal vagueness, the plough. To this the defeated candidate

rushes with delirious joy, welcomed as a father by appropriate groups of happy laborers, or from it the successful one is torn with difficulty, sustained alone by a noble sense of public duty. Only I have observed, that, if the scene be laid at Bâton Rouge or Ashland, the laborers are kept carefully in the background, and are heard to shout from behind the scenes in a singular tone resembling ululation, and accompanied by a sound not unlike vigorous clapping. This, however, may be artistically in keeping with the habits of the rustic population of those localities. The precise connection between agricultural pursuits and statesmanship, I have not been able, after diligent inquiry, to discover. But, that my investigations may not be barren of all fruit, I will mention one curious statistical fact, which I consider thoroughly established, namely, that no real farmer ever attains practically beyond a seat in General Court, however theoretically qualified for more exalted station.

It is probable that some other prospect has been opened to Mr. Sawin, and that he has not made this great sacrifice without some definite understanding in regard to a seat in the cabinet or a foreign mission. It may be supposed that we of Jaalam were not untouched by a feeling of villatic pride in beholding our townsman occupying so large a space in the public eye. And to me, deeply revolving the qualifications necessary to a candidate in these frugal times, those of Mr. S. seemed peculiarly adapted to a successful campaign. The loss of a leg, an arm, an eye, and four fingers reduced him so nearly to the condition of a *vox et præterea nihil*, that I could think of nothing but the loss of his head by which his chance could have been bettered. But since he has chosen to balk our suffrages, we must content ourselves with what we can get, remembering *lactucos non esse dandas, dum carvâi sufficiant.* — H. W.]

I SPOSE you recollect that I explained my gennle views  
In the last billet that I writ, 'way down  
from Veery Cruze,  
Jest arter I'd a kind o' ben spontaneously sot up  
To run unanmerously fer the Presidential cup;  
O' course it worn't no wish o' mine,  
't wuz ferfely distressin',  
But poppiler enthusiasm gut so almighty pressin'  
Thet, though like sixty all along I fumed  
an' fussed an' sorrered,  
There did n't seem no ways to stop their bringin' on me forrerd:  
Fact is, they udged the matter so, I could n't help admittin'  
The Father o' his Country's shoes no feet but mine 'ould fit in,  
Besides the savin' o' the soles fer ages to succeed.



Seein' thet with one wannut foot, a pair  
'd be more 'n I need ;  
An', tell ye wut, them shoes 'll want a  
thund'rin sight o' patchin',  
Ef this ere fashion is to last we 've gut  
into o' hatchin'  
A pair o' second Washinton fer every  
new election, —  
Though, fer ez number one 's consarned,  
I don't make no objection.

I wuz agoin' on to say thet wen at fust I  
saw  
The masses would stick to 't I wuz the  
Country's father-'n-law,  
(They would ha' hed it *Father*, but I told  
'em 't would n't du,  
Coz thet wuz sutthin' of a sort they  
could n't split in tu,  
An' Washinton hed hed the thing laid  
fairly to his door,  
Nor dars n't say 't worn't his'n, much  
ez sixty year afore,)  
But 't aint no matter ez to thet ; wen I  
wuz nomernated,  
'T worn't natur but wut I should feel  
consid'able elated,  
An' wile the hooraw o' the thing wuz  
kind o' noo an' fresh,  
I thought our ticket would ha' caird the  
country with a resh.

Sence I 've come hum, though, an' looked  
round, I think I seem to find  
Strong argimunts ez thick ez fleas to  
make me change my mind ;  
It's clear to any one whose brain aint  
fur gone in a pthisis,  
Thet hail Columby's happy land is goin'  
thru a crisis,  
An' 't would n't nowadays du to hev the  
people's mind distracted  
By bein' all to once by sev'ral pop'lar  
names attackted ;  
'T would save holl haycartloads o' fuss  
an' three four months o' jaw,  
Ef some illustrious paytriot should back  
out an' withdraw ;  
So, ez I aint a crooked stick, jest like—  
like ole (I srow,  
I dunno ez I know his name)—I 'll go  
back to my plough.

Wenever an Amerikin distinguished pol-  
itishin  
Begins to try et wut they call definin'  
his posishin,

Wal, I, fer one, feel sure he aint gut  
nothin' to define ;  
It's so nine cases out o' ten, but jest that  
tenth is mine ;  
And 't aint no more 'n is proper 'n' right  
in sech a sitooation  
To hint the course you think 'll be the  
savin' o' the nation ;  
To funk right out o' p'lit'cal strife aint  
thought to be the thing,  
Without you deacon off the toon you  
want your folks should sing ;  
So I edvise the noomrous friends thet 's  
in one boat with me  
To jest up killick, jam right down their  
hellum hard a lee,  
Haul the sheets taut, an', laying out upon  
the Suthun tack,  
Make fer the safest port they can, wich,  
I think, is Ole Zack.

Next thing you 'll want to know, I  
spose, wut argimunts I seem  
To see thet makes me think this ere 'll  
be the strongest team ;  
Fust place, I 've ben consid'ble round in  
bar-rooms an' saloons  
Agetherin' public sentiment, 'mongst  
Demmercrats and Coons,  
An' 't aint ve'y offen thet I meet a chap  
but wut goes in  
Fer Rough an' Ready, fair an' square,  
hufs, taller, horns, an' skin ;  
I don't deny but wut, fer one, ez fur ez I  
could see,  
I did n't like at fust the Pheladelpy  
nomernee :  
I could ha' pinted to a man thet wuz, I  
guess, a peg  
Higher than him, — a soger, tu, an' with  
a wooden leg ;  
But every day with more an' more o'  
Taylor zeal I 'm burnin',  
Seein' wich way the tide thet sets to  
office is aturnin' ;  
Wy, into Bellers's we notched the votes  
down on three sticks, —  
'T wuz Birdofredum one, Cass *aight*, an'  
Taylor *twenty-six*,  
An' bein' the on'y canderdate thet wuz  
upon the ground,  
They said 't wuz no more 'n right thet I  
should pay the drinks all round ;  
Ef I 'd expected sech a trick, I would n't  
ha' cut my foot  
By goin' an' votin' fer myself like a con-  
sumed coot ;

It did n't make no diff'rence, though; I  
wish I may be cust,  
Ef Bellers wuz n't slim enough to say he  
would n't trust!

Another pint thet influences the minds  
o' sober jedges

Is thet the Gin'ral hez n't gut tied hand  
an' foot with pledges;

He hez n't told ye wut he is, an' so there  
aint no knowin'

But wut he may turn out to be the best  
there is agoin' ;

This, at the on'y spot thet pinched, the  
shoe directly eases,

Coz every one is free to 'xpect percisely  
wut he pleases:

I want free-trade; you don't; the Gin-  
'ral is n't bound to neither;—

I vote my way; you, yourn; an' both  
air sooted to a T there.

Ole Rough an' Ready, tu, 's a Wig, but  
without bein' ultry

(He 's like a holsome hayin' day, thet 's  
warm, but is n't sultry;

He 's jest wut I should call myself, a  
kin' o' *scratch* ez 't ware,

Thet aint exacly all a wig nor wholly  
your own hair;

I've ben a Wig three weeks myself,  
jest o' this mod'rate sort,

An' don't find them an' Demmercrats so  
different ez I thought;

They both act pooty much alike, an'  
push an' scrouge an' cus;

They 're like two pickpockets in league  
fer Uncle Samwell's pus;

Each takes a side, an' then they squeeze  
the ole man in between em,

Turn all his pockets wrong side out an'  
quick ez lightnin' clean 'em;

To nary one on 'em I'd trust a secon-  
handed rail

No furdur off 'an I could sling a bullock  
by the tail.

Webster sot matters right in thet air  
Mashfiel' speech o' his'n;—

"Taylor," sez he, "aint nary ways the  
one thet I'd a chizzen,

Nor he aint fittin' fer the place, an' like  
ez not he aint

No more 'n a tough ole bullethead, an'  
no gret of a saint;

But then," sez he, "obsarve my pint,  
he 's jest ez good to vote fer

Ez though the greasin' on him worn't a  
thing to hire Choate fer;

Aint it ez easy done to drop a ballot in  
a box

Fer one ez 't is fer t' other, fer the bull-  
dog ez the fox?"

It takes a mind like Dannel's, fact, ez big  
ez all ou' doors,

To find out thet it looks like rain arter  
it fairly pours;

I 'gree with him, it aint so drefle trou-  
blesome to vote

Fer Taylor arter all,—it 's jest to go an'  
change your coat;

Wen he 's once greased, you 'll swaller  
him an' never know on 't, source,

Unless he scratches, goin' down, with  
them 'ere Gin'ral's spurs.

I've ben a votin' Demmercrat, ez reg-  
'lar as a clock,

But don't find goin' Taylor gives my  
nerves no gret 'f a shock;

Truth is, the cutest leadin' Wigs, ever  
sence fust they found

Wich side the bread gut buttered on, hev  
kep' a edgin' round;

They kin' o' slipt the planks frum out th'  
ole platform one by one

An' made it gradooally noo, 'fore folks  
know'd wut wuz done,

Till, fur 'z I know, there aint an inch  
thet I could lay my han' on,

But I, or any Demmercrat, feels comf't-  
ble to stan' on,

An' ole Wig doctrines act'ly look, their  
occ'pants bein' gone,

Lonesome ez staddles on a mash with-  
out no hayricks on.

I spose it 's time now I should give my  
thoughts upon the plan,

Thet chipped the shell at Buffalo, o' set-  
tin' up ole Van.

I used to vote fer Martin, but, I swan,  
I'm clean disgusted,—

He aint the man thet I can say is fittin'  
to be trusted;

He aint half antislav'ry 'nough, nor I  
aint sure, ez some be,

He'd go in fer abolishin' the Deestrick  
o' Columby;

An', now I come to recollec, it kin' o'  
makes me sick 'z

A horse, to think o' wut he wuz in  
eighteen thirty-six.

An' then, another thing;—I guess,  
though mebby I am wrong,

This Buff 'lo plaster aint agoin' to dror  
almighty strong ;  
Some folks, I know, hev gut th' idee  
thet No 'thun dough 'll rise,  
Though, 'fore I see it riz an' baked, I  
would n't trust my eyes ;  
'T will take more emptins, a long chalk,  
than this noo party 's gut,  
To give sech heavy cakes ez them a  
start, I tell ye wut.  
But even ef they caird the day, there  
would n't be no endurin'  
To stan' upon a platform with sech crit-  
ters ez Van Buren ; —  
An' his son John, tu, I can't think how  
thet 'ere chap should dare  
To speak ez he doos ; wy, they say he  
used to cuss an' swear !  
I spose he never read the hymn thet  
tells how down the stairs  
A feller with long legs wuz throwed thet  
would n't say his prayers.  
This brings me to another pint : the  
leaders o' the party  
Aint jest sech men ez I can act along  
with free an' hearty ;  
They aint not quite respectable, an' wen  
a feller's morrils  
Don't toe the straightest kin' o' mark,  
wy, him an' me jest quarrels.  
I went to a free soil meetin' once, an'  
wut d' ye think I see ?  
A feller was aspoutin' there thet act'ly  
come to me,  
About two year ago last spring, ez nigh  
ez I can judge,  
An' axed me ef I did n't want to sign  
the Temprunce pledge !  
He's one o' them that goes about an' sez  
you hed n't ough'ter  
Drink nothin', mornin', noon, or night,  
stronger 'an Taunton water.  
There 's one rule I 've ben guided by, in  
settlin' how to vote, ollers, —  
I take the side thet *is n't* took by them  
consarned teetotallers.

Ez fer the niggers, I 've ben South, an'  
thet hez changed my min' ;  
A lazier ; more ongrateful set you could  
n't nowers fin'.

You know I mentioned in my last thet  
I should buy a nigger,  
Ef I could make a purchase at a pooty  
mod'rate figger ;  
So, ez there 's nothin' in the world I 'm  
fonder of 'an gunnin',

I closed a bargain finally to take a feller  
runnin'.

I shou'dered queen's-arm an' stumped  
out, an' wen I come t' th' swamp,  
'T worn't very long afore I gut upon the  
nest o' Pomp ;  
I come acrost a kin' o' hut, an', playin'  
round the door,  
Some little woolly-headed cubs, ez  
many 'z six or more.  
At fust I thought o' frin', but *think*  
*twice* is safest ollers ;  
There aint, thinks I, not one on 'em  
but 's wuth his twenty dollars,  
Or would be, ef I hed 'em back into a  
Christian land, —  
How temptin' all on 'em would look  
upon an auction-stand !  
(Not but wut I hate Slavery, in th'  
abstract, stem to starn, —  
I leave it ware our fathers did, a privit  
State consarn.)  
Soon 'z they see me, they yelled an' run,  
but Pomp wuz out ahoein'  
A leetle patch o' corn he hed, or else  
there aint no knowin'  
He would n't ha' took a pop at me ; but  
I hed gut the start,  
An' wen he looked, I vow he groaned  
ez though he 'd broke his heart ;  
He done it like a wite man, tu, ez nat'-  
ral ez a pictur,  
The imp'dunt, pis'nous hypocrite ! wuz  
'an a boy constrictur.  
"You can't gum *me*, I tell ye now, an'  
so you need n't try,  
I 'xpect my eye-teeth every mail, so jest  
shet up," sez I.  
"Don't go to actin' ugly now, or else  
I 'll let her strip,  
You 'd best draw kindly, seein' 'z how  
I 've gut ye on the hip ;  
Besides, you darned ole fool, it aint no  
gret of a disaster  
To be benev'lently druv back to a con-  
tented master,  
Ware you hed Christian priv'ldges you  
don't seem quite aware on,  
Or you 'd ha' never run away from bein'  
well took care on ;  
Ez fer kin' treatment, wy, he wuz so  
fond on ye, he said  
He 'd give a fifty spot right out, to git  
ye, 'live or dead ;  
Wite folks aint sot by half ez much ;  
'member I run away,



Wen I wuz bound to Cap'n Jakes, to  
Mattysqumscot Bay;  
Don' know him, likely? Spose not;  
wal, the mean ole codger went  
An' offered — wut reward, think? Wal,  
it worn't no *less* 'n a cent."

Wal, I jest gut 'em into line, an' druv  
'em on afore me,  
The pis'nous brutes, I'd no idee o' the  
ill-will they bore me;  
We walked till som'ers about noon, an'  
then it grew so hot  
I thought it best to camp awile, so I  
chose out a spot  
Jest under a magnoly tree, an' there  
right down I sot;  
Then I unstrapped my wooden leg, coz  
it begun to chafe,  
An' laid it down 'long side o' me, sup-  
posin' all wuz safe;  
I made my darkies all set down around  
me in a ring,  
An' sot an' kin' o' ciphered up how  
much the lot would bring;  
But, wile I dranked the peaceful cup of  
a pure heart an' min  
(Mixed with some wiskey, now an' then),  
Pomp he snaked up behin',  
An' creepin' grad'lly close tu, ez quiet  
ez a mink,  
Jest grabbed my leg, and then pulked  
foot, quicker 'an you could wink,  
An', come to look, they each on 'em  
hed gut behin' a tree,  
An' Pomp poked out the leg a piece,  
jest so ez I could see,  
An' yelled to me to throw away my pis-  
tils an' my gun,  
Or else thet they'd cair off the leg, an'  
fairly cut an' run.  
I vew I did n't b'lieve there wuz a de-  
cent alligator  
Thet hed a heart so destitoot o' common  
human natur;  
However, ez there worn't no help, I  
finally give in  
An' heft my arms away to git my leg  
safe back agin.  
Pomp gathered all the weapins up, an'  
then he come an' grinned,  
He showed his ivory some, I guess, an'  
sez, "You're fairly pinned;  
Jest buckle on your leg agin, an' git  
right up an' come,  
"T wun't du fer fammerly men like me  
to be so long frum hum."

At fust I put my foot right down an'  
swore I would n't budge.  
"Jest ez you choose," sez he, quite cool,  
"either be shot or trudge."  
So this black-hearted monster took an'  
act'llly druv me back  
Along the very footmarks o' my happy  
mornin' track,  
An' kep' me pris'ner 'bout six months,  
an' worked me, tu, like sin,  
Till I hed gut his corn an' his Carliny  
taters in;  
He made me larn him readin', tu (al-  
though the crittur saw  
How much it hut my morril sense to act  
agin the law),  
So'st he could read a Bible he'd gut;  
an' axed ef I could pint  
The North Star out; but there I put  
his nose some out o' jint,  
Fer I weeled roun' about sou'west, an',  
lookin' up a bit,  
Picked out a middlin' shiny one an' tole  
him thet wuz it.  
Fin'lly, he took me to the door, an',  
givin' me a kick,  
Sez, — "Ef you know wut's best fer ye,  
be off, now, double-quick;  
The winter-time's a comin' on, an',  
though I gut ye cheap,  
You're so darned lazy, I don't think  
you're hardly wuth your keep;  
Besides, the childrin's growin' up, an'  
you aint jest the model  
I'd like to hev 'em immertate, an' so  
you'd better toddle!"

Now is there anythin' on airtl 'll ever  
prove to me  
Thet renegader slaves like him air fit  
fer bein' free?  
D'you think they'll suck me in to jine  
the Buff'lo chaps, an' them  
Rank infidels thet go agin the Scriptur'l  
cus o' Shen?  
Not by a jugfull! sooner 'n thet, I'd  
go thru fire an' water;  
Wen I hev once made up my mind, a  
meet'nhus aint sotter;  
No, not though all the crows thet flies  
to pick my bones wuz cawin', —  
I guess we're in a Christian land, —  
Yourn,

BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN.

(Here, patient reader, we take leave of each  
other, I trust with some mutual satisfaction.  
I say *patient*, for I love not that kind which

skims dippingly over the surface of the page, as swallows over a pool before rain. By such no pearls shall be gathered. But if no pearls there be (as, indeed, the world is not without example of books wherefrom the longest-winded diver shall bring up no more than his proper handful of mud), yet let us hope that an oyster or two may reward adequate perseverance. If neither pearls nor oysters, yet is patience itself a gem worth diving deeply for.

It may seem to some that too much space has been usurped by my own private lucubrations, and some may be fain to bring against me that old jest of him who preached all his hearers out of the meeting-house save only the sexton, who, remaining for yet a little space, from a sense of official duty, at last gave out also, and, presenting the keys, humbly requested our preacher to lock the doors, when he should have wholly relieved himself of his testimony. I confess to a satisfaction in the self act of preaching, nor do I esteem a discourse to be wholly thrown away even upon a sleeping or unintelligent auditory. I cannot easily believe that the Gospel of Saint John, which Jacques Cartier ordered to be read in the Latin tongue to the Canadian savages, upon his first meeting with them, fell altogether upon stony ground. For the earnestness of the preacher is a sermon appreciable by duller intellects and most alien ears. In this wise did Episcopus convert many to his opinions, who yet understood not the language in which he discoursed. The chief thing is that the messenger believe that he has an authentic message to deliver. For counterfeit messengers that mode of treatment which Father John de Plano Carpini relates to have prevailed among the Tartars would seem effectual, and, perhaps, deserved enough. For my own part, I may lay claim to so much of the spirit of martyrdom as would have led me to go into banishment with those clergymen whom Alphonso the Sixth of Portugal drove out of his kingdom for refusing to shorten their pulpit eloquence. It is possible, that, having been invited into my brother Biglow's desk, I may have been too little scrupulous in using it for the venting of my own peculiar doctrines to a congregation drawn together in the expectation and with the desire of hearing him.

I am not wholly unconscious of a peculiarity of mental organization which impels me, like the railroad-engine with its train of cars, to run backward for a short distance in order to obtain a fairer start. I may compare myself to one fishing from the rocks when the sea runs high, who, misinterpreting the suction of the undertow for the biting of some larger fish, jerks suddenly, and finds that he has *caught bottom*, hauling in upon the end of his line a trail of various *algæ*, among which, nevertheless, the naturalist may haply find somewhat to repay the disappointment of the angler. Yet have I conscientiously endeavored to adapt myself to the impatient temper of the age, daily degenerating more and more from the high standard of our pristine New England. To the catalogue of lost arts I would mournfully add also that of listening to two-hour sermons. Surely we have been abridged into a race of pygmies. For, truly, in those of the old discourses yet subsisting to us in print, the endless spinal column of divisions and subdivisions can be likened to nothing so exactly as to the vertebrae of the saurians, whence the theorist may conjecture a race of Anakim proportionate to the withstanding of these other monsters. I say Anakim rather than Nephelim, because there seem reasons for supposing that the race of those whose heads (though no giants) are constantly enveloped in clouds (which that name imports) will never become extinct. The attempt to vanquish the innumerable *hauls* of one of those afore-mentioned discourses may supply us with a plausible interpretation of the second labor of Hercules, and his successful experiment with fire affords us a useful precedent.

But while I lament the degeneracy of the age in this regard, I cannot refuse to succumb to its influence. Looking out through my study-window, I see Mr. Biglow at a distance busy in gathering his Baldwins, of which, to judge by the number of barrels lying about under the trees, his crop is more abundant than my own, — by which sight I am admonished to turn to those orchards of the mind wherein my labors may be more prospered, and apply myself diligently to the preparation of my next Sabbath's discourse. — H. W.]

*MELIBŒUS-HIPPONAX.*

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THE

**Biglow Papers,**

SECOND SERIES.

*"Ἔστω ἄρ' ὁ ἰδιωτισμὸς ἐνίοτε τοῦ κόσμου παραπολὸ ἐμφανιστικώτερον.*

LONGINUS.

"J'aimerois mieulx que mon fils apprinst aux tavernes à parler, qu'aux escholes de la parlerie."

MONTAIGNE.

„Unser Sprach ist auch ein Sprach und kan so wohl ein Sack nennen als die Lattnet saccus.“

FISCHART.

*"Vim rebus aliquando ipsa verborum humilitas affert."*

QUINTILIANUS.

"O ma lengo,  
Plantarèy une estèlo à toun froun encrumit !"

JASMIN.





TO

E. R. HOAR.

Multos enim, quibus loquendi ratio non desit, invenias, quos curiose potius loqui dixeris quam Latine; quomodo et illa Attica anus Theophrastum, hominem alioqui disertissimum, annotata unius affectatione verbi, hospitem dixit, nec alio se id deprehendisse interrogata respondit, quam quod nimium Attice loqueretur." — QUINTILIANUS.

"Et Anglice sermonicari solebat populo, sed secundam linguam Norfolkicam ubi natus et nutritus erat." — CRONICA JOCELINI.

"La politique est une pierre attachée au cou de la littérature, et qui en moins de six mois la submerge. . . . Cette politique va offenser mortellement une moitié des lecteurs, et ennuyer l'autre qui l'a trouvée bien autrement spéciale et énergique dans le journal du matin." — HENRI BEYLE.



## INTRODUCTION.

THOUGH prefaces seem of late to have fallen under some reproach, they have at least this advantage, that they set us again on the feet of our personal consciousness and rescue us from the gregarious mock-modesty or cowardice of that *we* which shrills feebly throughout modern literature like the shrieking of mice in the walls of a house that has passed its prime. Having a few words to say to the many friends whom the "Biglow Papers" have won me, I shall accordingly take the freedom of the first person singular of the personal pronoun. Let each of the good-natured unknown who have cheered me by the written communication of their sympathy look upon this Introduction as a private letter to himself.

When, more than twenty years ago, I wrote the first of the series, I had no definite plan and no intention of ever writing another. Thinking the Mexican war, as I think it still, a national crime committed in behalf of Slavery, our common sin, and wishing to put the feeling of those who thought as I did in a way that would tell, I imagined to myself such an upcountry man as I had often seen at antislavery gatherings, capable of district-school English, but always instinctively falling back into the natural stronghold of his homely dialect when heated to the point of self-forgetfulness. When I began to carry out my conception and to write in my assumed character, I found myself in a strait between two perils. On the one hand, I was in danger of being carried beyond the limit of my own opinions, or at least of that temper with which every man should speak his mind in print, and on the other I feared the risk of seeming to vulgarize a deep and sacred conviction. I needed on occasion to rise above the level of mere *patois*, and for this purpose conceived the Rev. Mr. Wilbur, who should express the more cautious element of the New England character and its pedantry, as Mr. Biglow should serve for its homely common-sense vivified and heated by conscience. The parson was to be the complement rather than the antithesis of his parishioner, and I felt or fancied a certain humorous ele-

ment in the real identity of the two under a seeming incongruity. Mr. Wilbur's fondness for scraps of Latin, though drawn from the life, I adopted deliberately to heighten the contrast. Finding soon after that I needed some one as a mouthpiece of the mere drollery, for I conceive that true humor is never divorced from moral conviction, I invented Mr. Sawin for the clown of my little puppet-show. I meant to embody in him that half-conscious *immorality* which I had noticed as the recoil in gross natures from a puritanism that still strove to keep in its creed the intense savor which had long gone out of its faith and life. In the three I thought I should find room enough to express, as it was my plan to do, the popular feeling and opinion of the time. For the names of two of my characters, since I have received some remonstrances from very worthy persons who happen to bear them, I would say that they were purely fortuitous, probably mere unconscious memories of signboards or directories. Mr. Sawin's sprang from the accident of a rhyme at the end of his first epistle, and I purposely christened him by the impossible surname of Birdofredum not more to stigmatize him as the incarnation of "Manifest Destiny," in other words, of national recklessness as to right and wrong, than to avoid the chance of wounding any private sensitiveness.

The success of my experiment soon began not only to astonish me, but to make me feel the responsibility of knowing that I held in my hand a weapon instead of the more fencing-stick I had supposed. Very far from being a popular author under my own name, so far, indeed, as to be almost unread, I found the verses of my pseudonyme copied everywhere; I saw them pinned up in workshops; I heard them quoted and their authorship debated; I once even, when rumor had at length caught up my name in one of its eddies, had the satisfaction of overhearing it demonstrated, in the pauses of a concert, that I was utterly incompetent to have written anything of the kind. I had read too much not to know the utter worthlessness of contemporary reputation, especially as

regards satire, but I knew also that by giving a certain amount of influence it also had its worth, if that influence were used on the right side. I had learned, too, that the first requisite of good writing is to have an earnest and definite purpose, whether æsthetic or moral, and that even good writing, to please long, must have more than an average amount either of imagination or common-sense. The first of these falls to the lot of scarcely one in several generations; the last is within the reach of many in every one that passes; and of this an author may fairly hope to become in part the mouthpiece. If I put on the cap and bells and made myself one of the courtfools of King Demos, it was less to make his majesty laugh than to win a passage to his royal ears for certain serious things which I had deeply at heart. I say this because there is no imputation that could be more galling to any man's self-respect than that of being a mere jester. I endeavored, by generalizing my satire, to give it what value I could beyond the passing moment and the immediate application. How far I have succeeded I cannot tell, but I have had better luck than I ever looked for in seeing my verses survive to pass beyond their nonage.

In choosing the Yankee dialect, I did not act without forethought. It had long seemed to me that the great vice of American writing and speaking was a studied want of simplicity, that we were in danger of coming to look on our mother-tongue as a dead language, to be sought in the grammar and dictionary rather than in the heart, and that our only chance of escape was by seeking it at its living sources among those who were, as Scottowe says of Major-General Gibbons, "divinely illiterate." President Lincoln, the only really great public man whom these latter days have seen, was great also in this, that he was master—witness his speech at Gettysburg—of a truly masculine English, classic because it was of no special period, and level at once to the highest and lowest of his countrymen. I learn from the highest authority that his favorite reading was in Shakespeare and Milton, to which, of course, the Bible should be added. But whoever should read the debates in Congress might fancy himself present at a meeting of the city council of some city of Southern Gaul in the decline of the Empire, where barbarians with a Latin varnish emulated each other by being more than Ciceronian. Whether it be want of culture, for the highest outcome of that is simplicity, or for whatever reason, it is certain that very few American writers or speakers wield

their native language with the directness, precision, and force that are common as the day in the mother country. We use it like Scotsmen, not as if it belonged to us, but as if we wished to prove that we belonged to it, by showing our intimacy with its written rather than with its spoken dialect. And yet all the while our popular idiom is racy with life and vigor and originality, bucksome (as Milton used the word) to our new occasions, and proves itself no mere graft by sending up new suckers from the old root in spite of us. It is only from its roots in the living generations of men that a language can be reinforced with fresh vigor for its needs; what may be called a literate dialect grows ever more and more pedantic and foreign, till it becomes at last as unfitting a vehicle for living thought as monkish Latin. That we should all be made to talk like books is the danger with which we are threatened by the Universal Schoolmaster, who does his best to enslave the minds and memories of his victims to what he esteems the best models of English composition, that is to say, to the writers whose style is faultily correct and has no blood-warmth in it. No language after it has faded into *diction*, none that cannot suck up the feeding juices secreted for it in the rich mother-earth of common folk, can bring forth a sound and lusty book. True vigor and heartiness of phrase do not pass from page to page, but from man to man, where the brain is kindled and the lips supplied by downright living interests and by passion in its very throes. Language is the soil of thought, and our own especially is a rich leaf-mould, the slow deposit of ages, the shed foliage of feeling, fancy, and imagination, which has suffered an earth-change, that the vocal forest, as Howell called it, may clothe itself anew with living green. There is death in the dictionary; and, where language is too strictly limited by convention, the ground for expression to grow in is limited also; and we get a *potted* literature, Chinese dwarfs instead of healthy trees.

But while the schoolmaster has been busy starching our language and smoothing it flat with the mangle of a supposed classical authority, the newspaper reporter has been doing even more harm by stretching and swelling it to suit his occasions. A dozen years ago I began a list, which I have added to from time to time, of some of the changes which may be fairly laid at his door. I give a few of them as showing their tendency, all the more dangerous that their effect, like that of some poisons, is insensibly cumulative, and that they are

sure at last of effect among a people whose chief reading is the daily paper. I give in two columns the old style and its modern equivalent.

*Old Style.*

Was hanged.  
When the halter was put round his neck.

A great crowd came to see.  
Great fire.  
The fire spread.

House burned.  
The fire was got under.

Man fell.  
A horse and wagon ran against.

The frightened horse.  
Sent for the doctor.

The mayor of the city in a short speech welcomed.

I shall say a few words.

Began his answer.  
Asked him to dine.  
A bystander advised.

He died.

*New Style.*

Was launched into eternity.  
When the fatal noose was adjusted about the neck of the unfortunate victim of his own unbridled passions.

A vast concourse was assembled to witness.  
Disastrous conflagration.  
The conflagration extended its devastating career.

Edifice consumed.  
The progress of the devouring element was arrested.

Individual was precipitated.  
A valuable horse attached to a vehicle driven by J. S., in the employment of J. B., collided with.

The infuriated animal.  
Called into requisition the services of the family physician.

The chief magistrate of the metropolis, in well-chosen and eloquent language, frequently interrupted by the plaudits of the surging multitude, officially tendered the hospitalities.

I shall, with your permission, beg leave to offer some brief observations.

Commenced his rejoinder.  
Tendered him a banquet.

One of those omnipresent characters who, as if in pursuance of some previous arrangement, are certain to be encountered in the vicinity when an accident occurs, ventured the suggestion.

He deceased, he passed out of existence, his spirit quitted its earthly habitation, winged its way to eternity, shook off its burden, etc.

In one sense this is nothing new. The school of Pope in verse ended by wire-drawing its phrase to such thinness that it could bear no weight of meaning whatever. Nor is fine writing by any means confined to America. All writers without imagination fall into it of necessity whenever they attempt the figurative. I take two examples from Mr. Merivale's "History of the Romans under the Empire," which, indeed, is full of such. "The last years of the age familiarly styled the Augustan were singularly barren of the literary glories from which its celebrity was chiefly derived. One by one the stars in its firmament had been lost to the world; Virgil and Horace, etc., had long since died; the charm which the imagination of Livy had thrown over the earlier annals of Rome had ceased to shine on the details of almost contemporary history; and if the flood of his eloquence still continued flowing, we can hardly suppose that the stream was as rapid, as fresh, and as clear as ever." I will not waste time in criticising the bad English or the mixture of metaphor in these sentences, but will simply cite another from the same author

which is even worse. "The shadowy phantom of the Republic continued to flit before the eyes of the Cæsar. There was still, he apprehended, a germ of sentiment existing, on which a scion of his own house, or even a stranger, might boldly throw himself and raise the standard of patrician independence." Now a ghost may haunt a murderer, but hardly, I should think, to scare him with the threat of taking a new lease of its old tenement. And fancy the *scion of a house* in the act of *throwing itself upon a germ of sentiment to raise a standard!* I am glad, since we have so much in the same kind to answer for, that this bit of horticultural rhetoric is from beyond sea. I would not be supposed to condemn truly imaginative prose. There is a simplicity of splendor, no less than of plainness, and prose would be poor indeed if it could not find a tongue for that meaning of the mind which is behind the meaning of the words. It has sometimes seemed to me that in England there was a growing tendency to curtail language into a mere convenience, and to defecate it of all emotion as thoroughly as algebraic signs. This has arisen, no doubt, in part



from that healthy national contempt of humbug which is characteristic of Englishmen, in part from that sensitiveness to the ludicrous which makes them so shy of expressing feeling, but in part also, it is to be feared, from a growing distrust, one might almost say hatred, of whatever is super-material. There is something sad in the scorn with which their journalists treat the notion of there being such a thing as a national ideal, seeming utterly to have forgotten that even in the affairs of this world the imagination is as much matter-of-fact as the understanding. If we were to trust the impression made on us by some of the cleverest and most characteristic of their periodical literature, we should think England hopelessly stranded on the good-humored cynicism of well-to-do middle-age, and should fancy it an enchanted nation, doomed to sit forever with its feet under the mahogany in that after-dinner mood which follows conscientious repletion, and which it is ill-manners to disturb with any topics more exciting than the quality of the wines. But there are already symptoms that a large class of Englishmen are getting weary of the dominion of consols and divine common-sense, and to believe that eternal three *per cent* is not the chief end of man, nor the highest and only kind of interest to which the powers and opportunities of England are entitled.

The quality of exaggeration has often been remarked on as typical of American character, and especially of American humor. In Dr. Petri's *Gedrängtes Handbuch der Fremdwörter*, we are told that the word *humbug* is commonly used for the exaggerations of the North-Americans. To be sure, one would be tempted to think the dream of Columbus half fulfilled, and that Europe had found in the West a nearer way to Orientalism, at least in diction. But it seems to me that a great deal of what is set down as mere extravagance is more fitly to be called intensity and picturesqueness, symptoms of the imaginative faculty in full health and strength, though producing, as yet, only the raw and formless material in which poetry is to work. By and by, perhaps, the world will see it fashioned into poem and picture, and Europe, which will be hard pushed for originality ere long, may have to thank us for a new sensation. The French continue to find Shakespeare exaggerated because he treated English just as our country-folk do when they speak of a "steep price," or say that they "freeze to" a thing. The first postulate of an original literature is that a people should use

their language instinctively and unconsciously, as if it were a lively part of their growth and personality, not as the mere torpid boon of education or inheritance. Even Burns contrived to write very poor verse and prose in English. Vulgarisms are often only poetry in the egg. The late Mr. Horace Mann, in one of his public addresses, commented at some length on the beauty and moral significance of the French phrase *s'orienter*, and called on his young friends to practise upon it in life. There was not a Yankee in his audience whose problem had not always been to find out what was *about east*, and to shape his course accordingly. This charm which a familiar expression gains by being commented, as it were, and set in a new light by a foreign language, is curious and instructive. I cannot help thinking that Mr. Matthew Arnold forgets this a little too much sometimes when he writes of the beauties of French style. It would not be hard to find in the works of French Academicians phrases as coarse as those he cites from Burke, only they are veiled by the unfamiliarity of the language. But, however this may be, it is certain that poets and peasants please us in the same way by translating words back again to their primal freshness, and infusing them with a delightful strangeness which is anything but alienation. What, for example, is Milton's "*edge of battle*" but a doing into English of the Latin *acies*? *Was die Gans gedacht das der Schwan vollbracht*, what the goose but thought, that the swan full brought (or, to de-Saxonize it a little, what the goose conceived, that the swan achieved), and it may well be that the life, invention, and vigor shown by our popular speech, and the freedom with which it is shaped to the instant want of those who use it, are of the best omen for our having a swan at last. The part I have taken on myself is that of the humbler bird.

But it is affirmed that there is something innately vulgar in the Yankee dialect. M. Sainte-Beuve says, with his usual neatness: "*Je définis un patois une ancienne langue qui a eu des malheurs, ou encore une langue toute jeune et qui n'a pas fait fortune.*" The first part of his definition applies to a dialect like the Provençal, the last to the Tuscan before Dante had lifted it into a classic, and neither, it seems to me, will quite fit a *patois*, which is not properly a dialect, but rather certain archaisms, proverbial phrases, and modes of pronunciation, which maintain themselves among the uneducated side by side with the finished and universally accepted

language. Norman French, for example, or Scotch down to the time of James VI., could hardly be called *patois*, while I should be half inclined to name the Yankee a *lingo* rather than a dialect. It has retained a few words now fallen into disuse in the mother country, like *to tarry*, *to progress*, *fleshy*, *full*, and some others; it has changed the meaning of some, as in *freshet*; and it has clung to what I suspect to have been the broad Norman pronunciation of *e* (which Molière puts into the mouth of his rustics) in such words as *sarvant*, *perfect*, *vartoo*, and the like. It maintains something of the French sound of *a* also in words like *chamber*, *danger* (though the latter had certainly begun to take its present sound so early as 1636, when I find it sometimes spelt *dainger*). But in general it may be said that nothing can be found in it which does not still survive in some one or other of the English provincial dialects. There is, perhaps, a single exception in the verb *to sleeve*. *To sleeve* silk means to divide or ravel out a thread of silk with the point of a needle till it becomes *floss*. (A. S. *sléfan*, to *cleave* = divide.) This, I think, explains the "sleeveless errands" in "Troilus and Cressida" so inadequately, sometimes so ludicrously darkened by the commentators. Is not a "sleeveless errand" one that cannot be unravelled, incomprehensible and therefore bootless?

I am not speaking now of Americanisms properly so called, that is, of words or phrases which have grown into use here either through necessity, invention, or accident, such as a *carry*, a *one-horse affair*, a *prairie*, to *vamose*. Even these are fewer than is sometimes taken for granted. But I think some fair defence may be made against the charge of vulgarity. Properly speaking, vulgarity is in the thought, and not in the word or the way of pronouncing it. Modern French, the most polite of languages, is barbarously vulgar if compared with the Latin out of which it has been corrupted, or even with Italian. There is a wider gap, and one implying greater boorishness, between *ministerium* and *métier*, or *enspiens* and *sachant*, than between *druv* and *drove* or *agin* and *against*, which last is plainly an arrant superlative. Our rustic *coverlid* is nearer its French original than the diminutive *coverlet*, into which it has been ignorantly corrupted in politer speech. I obtained from three cultivated Englishmen at different times three diverse pronunciations of a single word, — *coucumber*, *cocucumber*, and *cucumber*. Of these the first, which is Yankee also, comes nearest to the nasality of *concombre*. Lord Ossory assures us that Voltaire saw the

best society in England, and Voltaire tells his countrymen that *handkerchief* was pronounced *hankercher*. I find it so spelt in Hakluyt and elsewhere. This enormity the Yankee still persists in, and as there is always a reason for such deviations from the sound as represented by the spelling, may we not suspect two sources of derivation, and find an ancestor for *kercher* in *couverture* rather than in *couvrechef*? And what greater phonetic vagary (which Dryden, by the way, called *fegary*) in our *lingua rustica* than this *ker* for *couvre*? I copy from the fly-leaves of my books where I have noted them from time to time a few examples of pronunciation and phrase which will show that the Yankee often has antiquity and very respectable literary authority on his side. My list might be largely increased by referring to glossaries, but to them every one can go for himself, and I have gathered enough for my purpose.

I will take first those cases in which something like the French sound has been preserved in certain single letters and diphthongs. And this opens a curious question as to how long this Gallicism maintained itself in England. Sometimes a divergence in pronunciation has given us two words with different meanings, as in *genteel* and *jaunty*, which I find coming in toward the close of the seventeenth century, and wavering between *genteel* and *jauntee*. It is usual in America to drop the *u* in words ending in *our*, — a very proper change recommended by Howell two centuries ago, and carried out by him so far as his printers would allow. This and the corresponding changes in *musique*, *musick*, and the like, which he also advocated, show that in his time the French accent indicated by the superfluous letters (for French had once nearly as strong an accent as Italian) had gone out of use. There is plenty of French accent down to the end of Elizabeth's reign. In Daniel we have *riches*' and *counsel*', in Bishop Hall *comet*', *chapèlain*, in Donne *pictures*', *virtue*', *presence*', *mortal*', *merit*', *hannous*', *giant*', with many more, and Marston's satires are full of them. The two latter, however, are not to be relied on, as they may be suspected of Chaucerizing. Herick writes *baptime*. The tendency to throw the accent backward began early. But the incongruities are perplexing, and perhaps mark the period of transition. In Warner's "Albion's England" we have *creator*' and *créature*' side by side with the modern *creator* and *creature*. *Envy* and *envying* occur in Campion (1602), and yet



*envy* survived Milton. In some cases we have gone back again nearer to the French, as in *rev'enue* for *reven'ue*. I had been so used to hearing *imbecile* pronounced with the accent on the first syllable, which is in accordance with the general tendency in such matters, that I was surprised to find *imbec'ile* in a verse of Wordsworth. The dictionaries all give it so. I asked a highly cultivated Englishman, and he declared for *imbeceel'*. In general it may be assumed that accent will finally settle on the syllable dictated by greater ease and therefore quickness of utterance. *Blas'phemous*, for example, is more rapidly pronounced than *blasphem'ous*, to which our Yankee clings, following in this the usage of many of the older poets. *Amer'ican* is easier than *Ameri'can*, and therefore the false quantity has carried the day, though the true one may be found in George Herbert, and even so late as Cowley.

To come back to the matter in hand. Our "uplandish man" retains the soft or thin sound of the *u* in some words, such as *rule*, *truth* (sometimes also pronounced *trüth*, not *trooth*), while he says *noo* for *new*, and gives to *view* and *few* so indescribable a mixture of the two sounds with a slight nasal tincture that it may be called the Yankee shibboleth. Voltaire says that the English pronounce *true* as if it rhymed with *view*; and this is the sound our rustics give to it. Spenser writes *deou* (*dew*) which can only be pronounced with the Yankee nasality. In *rule* the least sound of *a* precedes the *u*. I find *reule* in Pecock's "Repressor." He probably pronounced it *ray-coolé*, as the old French word from which it is derived was very likely to be sounded at first, with a reminiscence of its original *regula*. Tindal has *rueler*, and the Coventry Plays have *preudent*. In the "Parliament of Byrdes" I find *reule*. As for *noo*, may it not claim some sanction in its derivation, whether from *nouveau* or *neuf*, the ancient sound of which may very well have been *noof*, as nearer *novus*? *Beef* would seem more like to have come from *bufte* than from *bœuf*, unless the two were mere varieties of spelling. The Saxon *few* may have caught enough from its French cousin *peu* to claim the benefit of the same doubt as to sound; and our slang phrase *a few* (as "I licked him a few") may well appeal to *un peu* for sense and authority. Nay, might not *lick* itself turn out to be the good old word *lam* in an English disguise, if the latter should claim descent as, perhaps, he fairly might, from the Latin *lambere*? The New England *ferce* for *ferce*, and *perce* for *pierce* (sometimes

heard as *fairce* and *pairce*), are also Norman. For its antiquity I cite the rhyme of *verse* and *pierce* in Chapman and Donne, and in some commendatory verses by a Mr. Berkenhead before the poems of Francis Beaumont. Our *pairlous* for *perilous* is of the same kind, and is nearer Shakespeare's *parlous* than the modern pronunciation. One other Gallicism survives in our pronunciation. Perhaps I should rather call it a semi-Gallicism, for it is the result of a futile effort to reproduce a French sound with English lips. Thus for *joint*, *employ*, *royal*, we have *iynt*, *emply*, *ryle*, the last differing only from *rile* (*roi*) in a prolongation of the *y* sound. I find *royal* so pronounced in the "Mirror for Magistrates." In Walter de Biblesthorpe I find *solives* Englished by *gistes*. This, it is true, may have been pronounced *jeests*, but the pronunciation *jystes* must have preceded the present spelling, which was no doubt adopted after the radical meaning was forgotten, as analogical with other words in *oi*. In the same way after Norman-French influence had softened the *l* out of *would* (we already find *woud* for *veut* in N. F. poems), *should* followed the example, and then an *l* was foisted into *could*, where it does not belong, to satisfy the logic of the eye, which has affected the pronunciation and even the spelling of English more than is commonly supposed. I meet with *eyster* for *oyster* as early as the fourteenth century. I find *viage* in Bishop Hall and Middleton the dramatist, *bile* for *boil* in Donne and Chronothologos, *line* for *loin* in Hall, *ryall*, *chyse* (for *choice*), and *dystrye* for *destry* in the Coventry Plays. In Chapman's "All Fools" is the misprint of *employ* for *imply*, fairly inferring an identity of sound in the last syllable. Indeed, this pronunciation was habitual till after Pope, and Rogers tells us that the elegant Gray said *nause* for *noise* just as our rustics still do. Our *cornish* (which I find also in Herrick) remembers the French better than *cornice* does. While, clinging more closely to the Anglo-Saxon in dropping the *g* from the end of the present participle, the Yankee now and then pleases himself with an experiment in French nasality in words ending in *n*. It is not, so far as my experience goes, very common, though it may formerly have been more so. *Capt'ing*, for instance, I never heard save in jest, the habitual form being *kepp'n*. But at any rate it is no invention of ours. In that delightful old volume, "Ane Compendious Buke of Godly and Spirituall Songs," in which I know not whether the piety itself or the simplicity of its expression be more charming, I find *burding*, *garding*, and *cousing*, and in



the State Trials *uncerting* used by a gentleman. I confess that I like the *n* better than the *ng*.

Of Yankee preterites I find *rise* and *rize* for *rose* in Beaumont and Fletcher, Middleton, and Dryden, *clim* in Spenser, *chees* (*chose*) in Sir John Mandevil, *give* (*gave*) in the Coventry Plays, *shet* (*shut*) in Golding's Ovid, *het* in Chapman and in Weever's Epitaphs, *thriv* and *smit* in Drayton, *quit* in Ben Jonson and Henry More, and *pled* in the Paston Letters, nay, even in the fastidious Landor. *Rid* for *rode* was anciently common. So likewise was *see* for *saw*, but I find it in no writer of authority (except Golding), unless Chaucer's *seie* and Gower's *sigh* were, as I am inclined to think, so sounded. *Shew* is used by Hector Boece, Giles Fletcher, Drummond of Hawthornden, and in the Paston Letters. Similar strong preterites, like *snew*, *threw*, and even *mew*, are not without example. I find *sew* for *sowed* in Piers Ploughman. Indeed, the anomalies in English preterites are perplexing. We have probably transferred *flew* from *flow* (as the preterite of which I have heard it) to *fly* because we had another preterite in *fled*. Of weak preterites the Yankee retains *growed*, *blowed*, for which he has good authority, and less often *knowed*. His *sot* is merely a broad sounding of *sat*, no more inelegant than the common *got* for *gat*, which he further degrades into *gut*. When he says *darst*, he uses a form as old as Chaucer.

The Yankee has retained something of the long sound of the *a* in such words as *axe*, *wax*, pronouncing them *exe*, *wex* (shortened from *aix*, *waix*). He also says *hev* and *hed* (*have*, *had*) for *have* and *had*. In most cases he follows an Anglo-Saxon usage. In *aix* for *axe* he certainly does. I find *wex* and *aisches* (*ashes*) in Peacock, and *exe* in the Paston Letters. Golding rhymes *wax* with *wexe* and spells *challenge chelenge*. Chaucer wrote *hendy*. Dryden rhymes *can* with *men*, as Mr. Biglow would. Alexander Gill, Milton's teacher, in his "Logonomia" cites *hez* for *hath* as peculiar to Lincolnshire. I find *hayth* in Collier's "Bibliographical Account of Early English Literature" under the date 1584, and Lord Cromwell so wrote it. Sir Christopher Wren wrote *belcony*. Our *fect* is only the O. F. *faict*. *Thaim* for *them* was common in the sixteenth century. We have an example of the same thing in the double form of the verb *thrash*, *thresh*. While the New-Englander cannot be brought to say *instead* for *instid* (commonly 'stid where not the last word in a sentence), he changes the *i* into *e* in *red* for *rid*, *tell* for *till*, *hender* for *hinder*, *rense*

for *rinse*. I find *red* in the old interlude of "Thersytes," *tell* in a letter of Daborne to Henslowe, and also, I shudder to mention it, in a letter of the great Duchess of Marlborough, Atossa herself! It occurs twice in a single verse of the Chester Plays,

"Tell the day of dome, tell the beames blow."

From the word *blow* (in another sense) is formed *blowth*, which I heard again this summer after a long interval. Mr. Wright\* explains it as meaning "a blossom." With us a single blossom is *blow*, while *blowth* means the blossoming in general. A farmer would say that there was a good *blowth* on his fruit-trees. The word retreats farther inland and away from the railways, year by year. Wither rhymes *hinder* with *slender*, and Shakespeare and Lovelace have *renched* for *rinced*. In "Gammer Gurton" and "Mirror for Magistrates" is *sence* for *since*; Marlborough's Duchess so writes it, and Donne rhymes *since* with *Amiens* and *patience*, Bishop Hall and Otway with *pretence*, Chapman with *citizens*, Dryden with *providence*. Indeed, why should not *sithence* take that form? Dryden's wife (an earl's daughter) has *tell* for *till*, Margaret, mother of Henry VII., writes *secke* for *such*, and our *ef* finds authority in the old form *yeffe*.

*E* sometimes takes the place of *u*, as *fedge*, *tredge*, *bresh*. I find *tredge* in the interlude of "Jack Jugler," *bresh* in a citation by Collier from "London Cries" of the middle of the seventeenth century, and *resche* for *rush* (fifteenth century) in the very valuable "Volume of Vocabularies" edited by Mr. Wright. *Resce* is one of the Anglo-Saxon forms of the word in Bosworth's A. S. Dictionary. Golding has *shet*. The Yankee always shortens the *u* in the ending *ture*, making *ventur*, *natur*, *pictur*, and so on. This was common, also, among the educated of the last generation. I am inclined to think it may have been once universal, and I certainly think it more elegant than the vile *vencher*, *naycher*, *pickcher*, that have taken its place, sounding like the invention of a lexicographer to mitigate a sneeze. Nash in his "Pierce Penniless" has *ventur*, and so spells it, and I meet it also in Spenser, Drayton, Ben Jonson, Herrick, and Prior. Spenser has *tort' rest*, which can be contracted only from *tortur* and not from *torchur*. Quarles rhymes *nature* with *creator*, and Dryden with *satire*, which he doubtless pronounced according to its older form of *satyr*. Quarles has also *torture* and *mortar*. Mary Boleyn

\* Dictionary of Obsolete and Provincial English.

writes *kreatur*. I find *pikter* in Izaak Walton's autograph will.

I shall now give some examples which cannot so easily be ranked under any special head. Gill charges the Eastern counties with *kiver for cover*, and *ta for to*. The Yankee pronounces both *too* and *to* like *ta* (like the *tou* in *touch*) where they are not emphatic. When they are, both become *tu*. In old spelling, *to* is the common (and indeed correct) form of *too*, which is only *to* with the sense of *in addition*. I suspect that the sound of our *too* has caught something from the French *tout*, and it is possible that the old *too too* is not a reduplication, but a reminiscence of the feminine form of the same word (*toute*) as anciently pronounced, with the *e* not yet silenced. Gill gives a Northern origin to *geaun* for *gown* and *waund* for *wound* (*vulnus*). Lovelace has *waund*, but there is something too dreadful in suspecting Spenser (who *borealized* in his pastorals) of having ever been guilty of *geaun*! And yet some delicate mouths even now are careful to observe the Hibernicism of *ge-ard* for *guard*, and *ge-ur*l for *girl*. Sir Philip Sidney (*credite posteri!*) wrote *furr* for *far*. I would hardly have believed it had I not seen it in *fac-simile*. As some consolation, I find *furder* in Lord Bacon and Donne, and Wither rhymes *far* with *cur*. The Yankee, who omits the final *d* in many words, as do the Scotch, makes up for it by adding one in *geound*. The purist does not feel the loss of the *d* sensibly in *lawn* and *yon*, from the former of which it has dropped again after a wrongful adoption (retained in *laundry*), while it properly belongs to the latter. But what shall we make of *git*, *yit*, and *yis*? I find *yis* and *git* in Warner's "Albion's England," yet rhyming with *wit*, *admit*, and *fit* in Donne, with *wit* in the "Revenge's Tragedy," Beaumont, and Suckling, with *writ* in Dryden, and latest of all with *wit* in Sir Hanbury Williams. Prior rhymes *fitting* and *begetting*. Worse is to come. Among others, Donne rhymes *again* with *sin*, and Quarles repeatedly with *in*. Ben for *been*, of which our dear Whittier is so fond, has the authority of Sackville, "Gammer Gurton" (the work of a bishop), Chapman, Dryden, and many more, though *bin* seems to have been the common form. Whittier's accenting the first syllable of *rom'ance* finds an accomplice in Drayton among others, and though manifestly wrong, is analogous with *Rom'ans*. Of other Yankeeisms, whether of form or pronunciation, which I have met with I add a few at random. Peacock writes *sowdiers* (*sogers*, *soudoyers*), and Chapman and Gill

*sodder*. This absorption of the *l* is common in various dialects, especially in the Scottish. Peacock writes also *bigende*, and the authors of "Jack Jugler" and "Gammer Gurton" *yender*. The Yankee includes "*yon*" in the same category, and says "hither an' yen," for "to and fro." (Cf. German *jenseits*.) Peacock and plenty more have *wrasile*. Tindal has *agynste*, *gretter*, *shett*, *ondone*, *debytz*, and *scace*. "Jack Jugler" has *scacely* (which I have often heard, though *skurce* is the common form), and Donne and Dryden make *great* rhyme with *set*. In the inscription on Caxton's tomb I find *ynd* for *end*, which the Yankee more often makes *eend*, still using familiarly the old phrase "right anend" for "continuously." His "*stret* (straight) along" in the same sense, which I thought peculiar to him, I find in Peacock. Tindal's *debytz* for *deputy* is so perfectly Yankee that I could almost fancy the brave martyr to have been deacon of the First Parish at Jaalam Centre. "Jack Jugler" further gives us *playsent* and *sartayne*. Dryden rhymes *certain* with *parting*, and Chapman and Ben Jonson use *certain*, as the Yankee always does, for *certainly*. The "Coventry Mysteries" have *occupied*, *massage*, *nateralle*, *maternal* (*material*), and *meracles*, — all excellent Yankeeisms. In the "Quatre fils, Aymon" (1504),\* is *vertus* for *virtuous*. Thomas Fuller called *volume vullum*, I suspect, for he spells it *volumne*. However, *per contra*, Yankees habitually say *colume* for *column*. Indeed, to prove that our ancestors brought their pronunciation with them from the Old Country, and have not wantonly debased their mother tongue, I need only to cite the words *scriptur*, *Israll*, *athists*, and *cherfulness* from Governor Bradford's "History." So the good man wrote them, and so the good descendants of his fellow-exiles still pronounce them. Brampton Gurdon writes *shet* in a letter to Winthrop. *Purtend* (*pretend*) has crept like a serpent into the "Paradise of Dainty Devices"; *purvide*, which is not so bad, is in Chaucer. These, of course, are universal vulgarisms, and not peculiar to the Yankee. Butler has a Yankee phrase, and pronunciation too, in "To which these *carr'ings-on* did tend." Langham or Laneham, who wrote an account of the festivities at Kenilworth in honor of Queen Bess, and who evidently tried to spell phonetically, makes *sorrows* into *sororz*. Herrick writes *hollow* for *halloo*, and perhaps pronounced it (*hor-*

\* Cited in Collier. (I give my authority where I do not quote from the original book.)



*resco suggerens*!) *hollo*, as Yankees do. Why not, when it comes from *hold*? I find *stelaschyppe* (fellowship) in the Coventry Plays. Spenser and his queen neither of them scrupled to write *afore*, and the former feels no inelegance even in *chaw* and *idee*. 'Fore was common till after Herrick. Dryden has *do's* for *does*, and his wife spells *worse* *wosee*. *Afeared* was once universal. Warner has *ery* for *ever a*; nay, he also has *illy*, with which we were once ignorantly reproached by persons more familiar with Murray's Grammar than with English literature. And why not *illy*? Mr. Bartlett says it is "a word used by writers of an inferior class, who do not seem to perceive that *ill* is itself an adverb, without the termination *ly*," and quotes Dr. Messer, President of Brown University, as asking triumphantly, "Why don't you say *welly*?" I should like to have had Dr. Messer answer his own question. It would be truer to say that it was used by people who still remembered that *ill* was an adjective, the shortened form of *evil*, out of which Shakespeare and the translators of the Bible ventured to make *evilly*. This slurred *evil* is "the dram of eale" in "Hamlet." I find *illy* in Warner. The objection to *illy* is not an etymological one, but simply that it is contrary to good usage, — a very sufficient reason. *Ill* as an adverb was at first a vulgarism, precisely like the rustic's when he says, "I was treated *bad*." May not the reason of this exceptional form be looked for in that tendency to dodge what is hard to pronounce, to which I have already alluded? If the letters were distinctly uttered, as they should be, it would take too much time to say *ill-ly*, *well-ly*, and it is to be observed that we have avoided *smally*\* and *tally* in the same way, though we add *ish* to them without hesitation in *smallish* and *tallish*. We have, to be sure, *dully* and *fully*, but for the one we prefer *stupidly*, and the other (though this may have come from eliding the *y* before *as*) is giving way to *full*. The uneducated, whose utterance is slower, still make adverbs when they will by adding *like* to all manner of adjectives. We have had *big* charged upon us, because we use it where an Englishman would now use *great*. I fully admit that it were better to distinguish between them, allowing to *big* a certain contemptuous quality; but as for authority, I want none better than that of Jeremy Taylor, who, in his noble sermon "On the Return of Prayer," speaks of "Jesus, whose spirit

was meek and gentle up to the greatness of the *biggest* example." As for our double negative, I shall waste no time in quoting instances of it, because it was once as universal in English as it still is in the neo-Latin languages, where it does not strike us as vulgar. I am not sure that the loss of it is not to be regretted. But surely I shall admit the vulgarity of slurring or altogether eliding certain terminal consonants? I admit that a clear and sharp-cut enunciation is one of the crowning charms and elegancies of speech. Words so uttered are like coins fresh from the mint, compared with the worn and dingy drudges of long service, — I do not mean American coins, for those look less badly the more they lose of their original ugliness. No one is more painfully conscious than I of the contrast between the rifle-crack of an Englishman's *yes* and *no*, and the wet-fuse drawl of the same monosyllables in the mouths of my countrymen. But I do not find the dropping of final consonants disagreeable in Allan Ramsay or Burns, nor do I believe that our literary ancestors were sensible of that inelegance in the fusing them together of which we are conscious. How many educated men pronounce the *t* in *chestnut*? how many say *pentise* for *penthouse*, as they should? When a Yankee skipper says that he is "boun' for Gloster" (not Gloucester, with the leave of the Universal Schoolmaster), † he but speaks like Chaucer or an old ballad-singer, though they would have pronounced it *boon*. This is one of the cases where the *d* is surreptitious, and has been added in compliment to the verb *bind*, with which it has nothing to do. If we consider the root of the word (though of course I grant that every race has a right to do what it will with what is so peculiarly its own as its speech), the *d* has no more right there than at the end of *gone*, where it is often put by children, who are our best guides to the sources of linguistic corruption, and the best teachers of its processes. Cromwell, minister of Henry VIII., writes *worle* for *world*. Chapman has *wan* for *wand*, and *lawn* has rightfully displaced *laund*, though with no thought, I suspect, of etymology. Rogers tells us that Lady Bathurst sent him some letters written to William III. by Queen Mary, in which she addresses him as "*Dear Husban*." The old form *expoun*, which our farmers use, is more correct than the form with a barbarous *d* tacked on which has taken its place. Of the kind opposite to this, like

\* The word occurs in a letter of Mary Boleyn, in Golding and Warner. Milton also was fond of the word.

† Though I find Worcester in the *Mirror for Magistrates*.



our *gound* for *gown*, and the London cockney's *wind* for *wine*, I find *drown* for *drown* in the "Misfortunes of Arthur" (1584), and in Swift. And, by the way, whence came the long sound of *wind* which our poets still retain, and which survives in "winding" a horn, a totally different word from "winding" a kite-string? We say *behind* and *hinder* (comparative), and yet to *hinder*. Shakespeare pronounced *kind kind*, or what becomes of his play on that word and *kin* in Hamlet? Nay, did he not even (shall I dare to hint it?) drop the final *d* as the Yankee still does? John Lilly plays in the same way on *kindred* and *kindness*. But to come to some other ancient instances. Warner rhymes *bounds* with *crowns*, *grounds* with *towns*, *text* with *sex*, *worst* with *crust*, *interrupts* with *cups*; Drayton, *defects* with *sex*; Chapman, *amends* with *cleanse*; Webster, *defects* with *checks*; Ben Jonson, *minds* with *combines*; Marston, *trust* and *obsequious*, *clothes* and *shows*; Dryden gives the same sound to *clothes*, and has also *minds* with *designs*. Of course, I do not affirm that their ears may not have told them that these were imperfect rhymes (though I am by no means sure even of that), but they surely would never have tolerated any such had they suspected the least vulgarity in them. Prior has the rhyme *first* and *trust*, but puts it into the mouth of a landlady. Swift has *stunted* and *burnt it*, an intentionally imperfect rhyme, no doubt, but which I cite as giving precisely the Yankee pronunciation of *burned*. Donne couples in unhalloved wedlock *after* and *matter*, thus seeming to give to both the true Yankee sound; and it is not uncommon to find *after* and *daughter*. Worse than all, in one of Dodsley's Old Plays we have *onions* rhyming with *minions*. — I have tears in my eyes while I record it. And yet what is viler than the universal *Misses* (*Mrs.*) for *Mistress*? This was once a vulgarism, and in "The Miseries of Inforced Marriage" the rhyme (printed as prose in Dodsley's Old Plays by Collier),

"To make my young *mistress*,  
Delighting in *kisses*,"

is put into the mouth of the clown. Our people say *Injun* for *Indian*. The tendency to make this change where *i* follows *d* is common. The Italian *giorno* and French *jour* from *diurnus* are familiar examples. And yet *Injun* is one of those deprivations which the taste challenges peremptorily, though it have the authority of Charles Cotton — who rhymes "Indies" with "cringes" — and four English lexicographers, beginning with Dr. Sheridan,

bid us say *invidgeous*. Yet after all it is no worse than the debasement which all our terminations in *tion* and *tience* have undergone, which yet we hear with *resignashun* and *payshunce*, though it might have aroused both *impat-i-ence* and *indigna-ti-on* in Shakespeare's time. When George Herbert tells us that if the sermon be dull,

"God takes a text and preacheth pati-ence,"

the prolongation of the word seems to convey some hint at the longanimity of the virtue. Consider what a poor curtal we have made of Ocean. There was something of his heave and expanse in *o-ce-an*, and Fletcher knew how to use it when he wrote so fine a verse as the second of these, the best deep-sea verse I know, —

"In desperate storms stem with a little rudder  
The tumbling ruins of the ocean."

Oceanus was not then wholly shorn of his divine proportions, and our modern *oshun* sounds like the gush of small-beer in comparison. Some other contractions of ours have a vulgar air about them. *More'n* for *more than*, as one of the worst, may stand for a type of such. Yet our old dramatists are full of such obscurations (elisions they can hardly be called) of the *th*, making *wher* of *whether*, *where* of *whither*, *hera* of *hither*, *bro'r* of *brother*, *smo'r* of *smother*, *mo'r* of *mother*, and so on. And dear Brer Rabbit, can I forget him? Indeed, it is this that explains the word *rare* (which has Dryden's support), and which we say of meat where an Englishman would use *underdone*. I do not believe, with the dictionaries, that it had ever anything to do with the Icelandic *hrar* (*raw*), as it plainly has not in *rareripe*, which means earlier ripe. President Lincoln said of a precocious boy that "he was a *rareripe*." And I do not believe it, for this reason, that the earliest form of the word with us was, and the commoner now in the inland parts still is, so far as I can discover, *raredone*. Golding has "egs reere-rosted," which, whatever else it mean, cannot mean *raw-roasted*. I find *rather* as a monosyllable in Donne, and still better, as giving the sound, rhyming with *fair* in Warner. There is an epigram of Sir Thomas Browne in which the words *rather than* make a monosyllable:

"What furie is 't to take Death's part  
And rather than by Nature, die by Art!"

The contraction *more'n* I find in the old play "Fumius Troes," in a verse where the measure is so strongly accented as to leave it beyond doubt, —

"A golden crown whose heirs  
More than half the world subdue."

It may be, however, that the contraction is in "th' orld." It is unmistakable in the "Second Maiden's Tragedy":—

"It were but folly,  
Dear soul, to boast of *more than* I can perform."

Is our *gin* for *given* more violent than *mar'l* for *marvel*, which was once common, and which I find as late as Herrick? Nay, Herrick has *gin* (spelling it *g'en*), too, as do the Scotch, who agree with us likewise in preferring *chimly* to *chimney*.

I will now leave pronunciation and turn to words or phrases which have been supposed peculiar to us, only pausing to pick up a single dropped stitch, in the pronunciation of the word *supreme*, which I had thought native till I found it in the well-languaged Daniel. I will begin with a word of which I have never met with any example in any English writer of authority. We express the first stage of withering in a green plant suddenly cut down by the verb *to wilt*. It is, of course, own cousin of the German *welken*, but I have never come upon it in literary use, and my own books of reference give me faint help. Graff gives *welhèn*, *marcescere*, and refers to *welh* (*weak*), and conjecturally to A.-S. *hwelan*. The A.-S. *wealwoian* (*to wither*) is nearer, but not so near as two words in the Icelandic, which perhaps put us on the track of its ancestry, — *velgi*, *tepefacere* (and *velki*, with the derivative) meaning *contaminare*. *Wilt*, at any rate, is a good word, filling, as it does, a sensible gap between drooping and withering, and the imaginative phrase "he wilted right down," like "he caved right in," is a true Americanism. *Wilt* occurs in English provincial glossaries, but is explained by *wither*, which with us it does not mean. We have a few words such as *cache*, *cohog*, *carry* (*portage*), *shoot* (*chute*), *timber* (*forest*), *bushwhack* (to pull a boat along by the bushes on the edge of a stream), *duckeye* (a picturesque word for the horse-chestnut); but how many can we be said to have fairly brought into the language, as Alexander Gill, who first mentions Americanisms, meant it when he said, "*Sed et ab Americanis nonnulla mutuamur ut MAIZ et CANOA*"? Very few, I suspect, and those mostly by borrowing from the French, German, Spanish, or Indian.\* "The Dipper" for the "Great Bear" strikes me as having a native air. *Bogus*, in the sense of *worthless*, is undoubtedly ours, but is, I

more than suspect, a corruption of the French *bagasse* (from low Latin *bagasea*), which travelled up the Mississippi from New Orleans, where it was used for the refuse of the sugar-cane. It is true, we have modified the meaning of some words. We use *freshet* in the sense of *flood*, for which I have not chanced upon any authority. Our New England cross between Ancient Pistol and Dugald Dalgetty, Captain Underhill, uses the word (1638) to mean a *current*, and I do not recollect it elsewhere in that sense. I therefore leave it with a ? for future explorers. *Crick* for *creek* I find in Captain John Smith and in the dedication of Fuller's "Holy Warre," and *run*, meaning a *small stream*, in Waymouth's "Voyage" (1605). *Humans* for *men*, which Mr. Bartlett includes in his "Dictionary of Americanisms," is Chapman's habitual phrase in his translation of Homer. I find it also in the old play of "The Hog hath lost his Pearl." *Dogs* for *andirons* is still current in New England, and in Walter de Biblesworth I find *chiens* glossed in the margin by *andirons*. *Gunning* for *shooting* is in Drayton. We once got credit for the poetical word *fall* for *autumn*, but Mr. Bartlett and the last edition of Webster's Dictionary refer us to Dryden. It is even older, for I find it in Drayton, and Bishop Hall has *autumn fall*. Middleton plays upon the word: "May'st thou have a reasonable good *spring*, for thou art like to have many dangerous foul *falls*." Daniel does the same, and Coleridge uses it as we do. Gray uses the archaism *picked for peaked*, and the word *smudge* (as our backwoodsmen do) for a smothered fire. Lord Herbert of Cherbury (more properly perhaps than even Sidney, the last *preux chevalier*) has "the Emperor's folks" just as a Yankee would say it. *Loan for lend*, with which we have hitherto been blackened, I must retort upon the mother island, for it appears so long ago as in "Albion's England." *Fleshy*, in the sense of *stout*, may claim Ben Jonson's warrant, and I find it also so lately as in Francklin's "Lucian." *Chore* is also Jonson's word, and I am inclined to prefer it to *chare* and *char*, because I think that I see a more natural origin in it for the French *jour*—whence it might come to mean a day's work, and thence a job—than anywhere else.† *At onst* for *at once* I thought a corruption of our own, till I found it in the Chester Plays. I am now inclined to suspect it no corruption at all, but only an erratic and obsolete superlative *at onest*. To

\* This was written twenty years ago, and now (1890) I cannot open an English journal without coming upon an Americanism.

† The Rev. A. L. Mayhew of Wadham College, Oxford, has convinced me that I was astray in this.



*progress'* was flung in our teeth till Mr. Pickering retorted with Shakespeare's "doth *pro*'gress down thy cheeks." I confess that I was never satisfied with this answer, because the accent was different, and because the word might here be reckoned a substantive quite as well as a verb. Mr. Bartlett (in his dictionary above cited) adds a surrebutter in a verse from Ford's "Broken Heart." Here the word is clearly a verb, but with the accent unhappily still on the first syllable. Mr. Bartlett says that he "cannot say whether the word was used in Bacon's time or not." It certainly was, and with the accent we give to it. Ben Jonson, in the "Alchemist," has this verse,

"Progress' so from extreme unto extreme,"

and Sir Philip Sidney,

"Progressing then from fair Turias' golden place."

Surely we may now sleep in peace, and our English cousins will forgive us, since we have cleared ourselves from any suspicion of originality in the matter! Even after I had convinced myself that the chances were desperately against our having invented any of the *Americanisms* with which we are *faulted* and which we are in the habit of *voicing*, there were one or two which had so prevailingly indigenous an accent as to stagger me a little. One of these was "the biggest *thing out*." Alas, even this slender comfort is denied me. Old Gower has

"So harde an herte was none *oute*,"

and

"That such merveilles was none *oute*."

He also, by the way, says "a *sighte of flowres*" as naturally as our up-country folk would say it. *Poor for lean, thirds for dower*, and *dry for thirsty* I find in Middleton's plays. *Dry* is also in Skelton and in the "World" (1754). In a note on Middleton, Mr. Dyce thinks it needful to explain the phrase *I can't tell* (universal in America) by the gloss *I could not say*. Middleton also uses *sneaked*, which I had believed an Americanism till I saw it there. It is, of course, only another form of *snatch*, analogous to *theek* and *thatch* (cf. the proper names Dekker and Thacher), *break (brack)* and *breach, make* (still common with us) and *match*. 'Long on for *occasioned* by ("who is this 'long on?") occurs constantly in Gower and likewise in Milton. 'Cause *why* is in Chaucer. *Raising* (an English version of the French *leaven*) for *yeast* is employed by Gayton in his "Festivous Notes on Don Quixote." I have never seen an in-

stance of our New England word *emplyns* in the same sense, nor can I divine its original. Gayton has *limekill*; also *shuts for shutters*, and the latter is used by Mrs. Hutchinson in her "Life of Colonel Hutchinson." Bishop Hall, and Purchas in his "Pilgrims," have *chist* for *chest*, and it is certainly nearer *cista*, as well as to its form in the Teutonic languages, whence probably we got it. We retain the old sound from *cist*, but *chest* is as old as Chaucer. Lovelace says *wropt* for *wrapt*. "Musicianer" I had always associated with the militia-musters of my boyhood, and too hastily concluded it an abomination of our own, but Mr. Wright calls it a Norfolk word, and I find it to be as old as 1642 by an extract in Collier. "Not worth the time of day" had passed with me for native till I saw it in Shakespeare's "Pericles." For *slick* (which is only a shorter sound of *sleek*, like *crick* and the now universal *britches* for *breeches*) I will only call Chapman and Jonson. "That's a sure card!" and "That's a stinger!" both sound like modern slang, but you will find the one in the old interlude of "Thersytes" (1537), and the other in Middleton. "Right here" a favorite phrase with our orators and with a certain class of our editors, turns up *passim* in the Chester and Coventry plays. Mr. Dickens found something very ludicrous in what he considered our neologism *right away*. But I find a phrase very like it, and which I would gladly suspect to be a misprint for it, in "Gammer Gurton":—

"Lyght it and bring it *tite away*."

But *tite* is the true word in this case. After all, what is it but another form of *straight-way*? *Cussedness*, meaning *wickedness, malignity*, and *cuss*, a sneaking, ill-natured fellow, in such phrases as "He done it out o' pure cussedness," and "He is a nateral cuss," have been commonly thought Yankeeisms. To vent certain contemptuously indignant moods they are admirable in their rough-and-ready way. But neither is, our own. *Cursydnesse*, in the same sense of malignant wickedness, occurs in the Coventry Plays, and *cuss* may perhaps claim to have come in with the Conqueror. At least the term is also French. Saint Simon uses it and confesses its usefulness. Speaking of the Abbé Dubois, he says, "Qui étoit en plein ce qu'un mauvais françois appelle un *sacre*, mais qui ne se peat guère exprimer autrement." "Not worth a cuss," though supported by "not worth a damn," may be a mere corruption, since "not worth a *cross*" is in "Piers Ploughman." "I



don't see it" was the popular slang a year or two ago, and seemed to spring from the soil; but no, it is in Cibber's "Careless Husband." *Green sauce* for *vegetables* I meet in Beaumont and Fletcher, Gayton, and elsewhere. Our rustic pronunciation *sauce* (for either the diphthong *au* was anciently pronounced *ah*, or else we have followed abundant analogy in changing it to the latter sound, as we have in *chance*, *dance*, and so many more) may be the older one, and at least gives some hint at its ancestor *salsa*. *Warn*, in the sense of *notify*, is, I believe, now peculiar to us, but Pecoock so employs it. I find *primmer* (*primer*, as we pronounce it) in Beaumont and Fletcher, and a "square eater" too (compare our "square meal"), *heft* for *weight*, and "muchness" in the "Mirror for Magistrates," *bankbill* in Swift and Fielding, and *as for that* I might say *passim*. *To cotton* to is, I rather think, an Americanism. The nearest approach to it I have found is *cotton together*, in Congreve's "Love for Love." *To cotton* or *cotten*, in another sense, is old and common. Our word means to *cling*, and its origin, possibly, is to be sought in another direction, perhaps in A. S. *cvead*, which means *mud*, *clay* (both proverbially clinging), or better yet, in the Icelandic *qvoda* (otherwise *köð*), meaning *resin* and *glue*, which are *kar' efoxyr* sticky substances. *To spit cotton* is, I think, American, and also, perhaps, *to flax* for *to beat*. *To the halves* still survives among us, though apparently obsolete in England. It means either to let or to hire a piece of land, receiving half the profit in money or in kind (*partibus locare*). I mention it because in a note by some English editor, to which I have lost my reference, I have seen it wrongly explained. The editors of Nares cite Burton. *To put*, in the sense of *to go*, as *Put!* for *Begone!* would seem our own, and yet it is strictly analogous to the French *se mettre à la voie*, and the Italian *mettersi in via*. Indeed, Dante has a verse,

"Io sarei [for *mi sarei*] già messo per lo sentiero,"

which, but for the indignity, might be translated,

"I should, ere this, have *put* along the way."

I deprecate in advance any share in General Banks's notions of international law, but we may all take a just pride in his exuberant eloquence as something distinctively American. When he spoke a few years ago of "letting the Union slide," even those who, for political purposes, reproached him with the sentiment, admired the indigenous virtue of his phrase. Yet

I find "let the world slide" in Heywood's "Edward IV.;" and in Beaumont and Fletcher's "Wit without Money" Valentine says,

"Will you go drink,  
And let the world slide?"

So also in Sidney's *Arcadia*,

"Let his dominion slide."

In the one case it is put into the mouth of a clown, in the other, of a gentleman, and was evidently proverbial. It has even higher sanction, for Chaucer writes,

"Well nigh all other curés *let he slide*."

Mr. Bartlett gives "above one's bend" as an Americanism; but compare Hamlet's "to the top of my bent." *In his tracks* for *immediately* has acquired an American accent, and passes where he can for a native, but is an importation nevertheless; for what is he but the Latin *e vestigio*, or at best the Norman French *enceslespas*, both which have the same meaning? *Hot-foot* (provincial also in England), I find in the old romance of "Tristan,"

"Si s'en parti CHAUT PAS."

*Like* for *as* is never used in New England, but is universal in the South and West. It has on its side the authority of two kings (*ego sum rex Romanorum et supra grammaticam*), Henry VIII. and Charles I. This were ample, without throwing into the scale the scholar and poet Daniel. *Them* was used as a nominative by the majesty of Edward VI., by Sir P. Hoby, and by Lord Paget (in Froude's "History"). I have never seen any passage adduced where *guess* was used as the Yankee uses it. The word was familiar in the mouths of our ancestors, but with a different shade of meaning from that we have given it, which is something like *rather think*, though the Yankee implies a confident certainty by it when he says, "I guess I *du!*" There are two examples in Otway, one of which ("So in the struggle, I guess the note was lost") perhaps might serve our purpose, and Coleridge's

"I guess 't was fearful there to see"

certainly comes very near. But I have a higher authority than either in Selden, who, in one of his notes to the "Polyolbion," writes, "The first inventor of them (I guess you dislike not the addition) was one Berthold Swartz." Here he must mean by it, "I take it for granted." Robert Greene, in his "Quip for an Upstart Courtier," makes Cloth-breeches say, "but I *gesse* your maistership never tried what true honor meant." In this case the word

seems to be used with a meaning precisely like that which we give it. Another peculiarity almost as prominent is the beginning sentences, especially in answer to questions, with "well." Put before such a phrase as "How d'e do?" it is commonly short, and has the sound of *wul*, but in reply it is deliberative, and the various shades of meaning which can be conveyed by difference of intonation, and by prolonging or abbreviating, I should vainly attempt to describe. I have heard *ooa-ahl, wahl, ahl, wäl*, and something nearly approaching the sound of the *le* in *able*. Sometimes before "I" it dwindles to a mere *l*, as "I dunno." A friend of mine (why should I not please myself, though I displease him, by brightening my page with the initials of the most exquisite of humorists, J. H.?) told me that he once heard five "wells," like pioneers, precede the answer to an inquiry about the price of land. The first was the ordinary *wul*, in deference to custom; the second, the long, perpending *ooahl*, with a falling inflection of the voice; the third, the same, but with the voice rising, as if in despair of a conclusion, into a plaintively nasal whine; the fourth, *wulh*, ending in the aspirate of a sigh; and then, fifth, came a short, sharp *wal*, showing that a conclusion had been reached. I have used this latter form in the "Biglow Papers," because, if enough nasality be added, it represents most nearly the average sound of what I may call the interjection.

A locution prevails in the Southern and Middle States which is so curious that, though never heard in New England, I will give a few lines to its discussion, the more readily because it is extinct elsewhere. I mean the use of *allow* in the sense of *affirm*, as "I allow that's a good horse." I find the word so used in 1558 by Anthony Jenkinson in Hakluyt: "Come they sowe not, neither doe eate any bread, mocking the Christians for the same, and disabling our strengthe, saying we live by eating the toppe of a weede, and drinke a drinke made of the same, *allowing* theyr great devouring of flesh and drinking of milke to be the increase of theyr strength." That is, they undervalued our strength, and affirmed their own to be the result of a certain diet. In another passage of the same narrative the word has its more common meaning of approving or praising: "The said king, much *allowing* this declaration, said." Ducange quotes Bracton *sub voce* ADLOCARE for the meaning "to admit as proved," and the transition from this to "affirm" is by no means violent. Izaak

Walton has "Lebault *allows* waterfrogs to be good meat," and here the word is equivalent to *affirms*. At the same time, when we consider some of the meanings of *allow* in old English, and of *allower* in old French, and also remember that the verbs *prize* and *praise* are from one root, I think we must admit *allaudare* to a share in the paternity of *allow*. The sentence from Hakluyt would read equally well, "contemning our strengthe, . . . and praising (or valuing) their great eating of flesh as the cause of their increase in strength." After all, if we confine ourselves to *allocare*, it may turn out that the word was somewhere and somewhen used for *to bet*, analogously to *put up, put down, post* (cf. Spanish *apostar*), and the like. I hear boys in the street continually saying, "I bet that's a good horse," or what not, meaning by no means to risk anything beyond their opinion in the matter.

The word *improve*, in the sense of "to occupy, make use of, employ," as Dr. Pickering defines it, he long ago proved to be no neologism. He would have done better, I think, had he substituted *profit by* for *employ*. He cites Dr. Franklin as saying that the word had never, so far as he knew, been used in New England before he left it in 1723, except in Dr. Mather's "Remarkable Providences," which he oddly calls a "very old book." Franklin, as Dr. Pickering goes on to show, was mistaken. Mr. Bartlett in his "Dictionary" merely abridges Pickering. Both of them should have confined the application of the word to material things, its extension to which is all that is peculiar in the supposed American use of it. For surely "Complete Letter-Writers" have been "*improving* this opportunity" time out of mind. I will illustrate the word a little further, because Pickering cites no English authorities. Skelton has a passage in his "Phyllyp Sparowe," which I quote the rather as it contains also the word *allowed*, and as it distinguishes *improve* from *employ*:—

"His [Chaucer's] Englysh well allowed.  
So as it is *enproved*,  
For as it is *employd*,  
There is no Englysh voyd."

Here the meaning is to *profit by*. In Fuller's "Holy Warre" (1647), we have "The Egyptians standing on the firm ground, were thereby enabled to *improve* and enforce their darts to the utmost." Here the word might certainly mean to *make use of*. Mrs. Hutchinson (Life of Colonel H.) uses the word in the same



way: "And therefore did not *emproove* his interest to engage the country in the quarrell." Swift in one of his letters says: "There is not an acre of land in Ireland turned to half its advantage; yet it is better *improved* than the people." I find it also in, "Strength out of Weakness" (1652), and Plutarch's "Morals" (1714), but I know of only one example of its use in the purely American sense, and that is, "a very good *improvement* for a mill" in the "State Trials" (Speech of the Attorney-General in the Lady Ivy's case, 1684). In the sense of *employ*, I could cite a dozen old English authorities.

In running over the fly-leaves of those delightful folios for this reference, I find a note which reminds me of another word, for our abuse of which we have been deservedly ridiculed. I mean *lady*. It is true I might cite the example of the Italian *domna*\* (*domina*), which has been treated in the same way by a whole nation, and not, as *lady* among us, by the uncultivated only. It perhaps grew into use in the half-democratic republics of Italy in the same way and for the same reasons as with us. But I admit that our abuse of the word is villanous. I know of an orator who once said in a public meeting where bonnets preponderated, that "the ladies were last at the cross and first at the tomb"! But similar sins were committed before our day and in the mother country. In the "Harleian Miscellany" (vol. v. p. 455) I find "this *lady* is my servant; the hedger's daughter Ioan." In the "State Trials" I learn of "a *gentlewoman* that lives cook with" such a one, and I hear the Lord High Steward speaking of the wife of a waiter at a bagnio as a *gentlewoman*! From the same authority, by the way, I can state that our vile habit of chewing tobacco had the somewhat unsavory example of Titus Oates, and I know by tradition from an eyewitness that the elegant General Burgoyne partook of the same vice. Howell, in one of his letters (dated 26 August, 1623), speaks thus of another "institution" which many have thought American: "They speak much of that boisterous Bishop of Halverstadt (for so they term him here), that, having taken a place wher there were two Monasteries of Nuns and Friars, he caus'd divers feather-beds to be rip'd, and all the feathers to be thrown in a great Hall, whither the Nuns and Friars were thrust naked with their bodies oil'd and pitch'd, and to tumble among the feathers." How-

ell speaks as if the thing were new to him, and I know not if the "boisterous" Bishop was the inventor of it, but I find it practised in England before our Revolution.

Before leaving the subject, I will add a few comments made from time to time on the margin of Mr. Bartlett's excellent "Dictionary," to which I am glad thus publicly to acknowledge my many obligations. "Avails" is good old English, and the *vails* of Sir Joshua Reynolds's porter are famous. Averse *from*, averse *to*, and in connection with them the English vulgarism "different *to*." The corrupt use of *to* in these cases, as well as in the Yankee "he lives to Salem," "to home," and others, must be a very old one, for in the one case it plainly arose from confounding the two French prepositions *à* (from Latin *ad* and *ab*), and in the other from translating the first of them. I once thought "different *to*" a modern vulgarism, and Mr. Thackeray, on my pointing it out to him in "Henry Esmond," confessed it to be an anachronism. Mr. Bartlett refers to "the old writers quoted in Richardson's Dictionary" for "different *to*," though in my edition of that work all the examples are with *from*. But I find *to* used invariably by Sir R. Hawkins in Hakluyt. *Banjo* is a negro corruption of O. E. *bandore*. *Bind-weed* can hardly be modern, for *wood-bind* is old and radically right, intertwining itself through *bindan* and *windan* with classic stems. *Bobolink*: is this a contraction for Bob o' Lincoln? I find *bobolymes*, in one of the poems attributed to Skelton, where it may be rendered *giddy-pate*, a term very fit for the bird in his ecstasies. *Cruel for great* is in Hakluyt. *Bowling-alley* is in Nash's "Pierce Penniless." *Curious*, meaning *nice*, occurs continually in old writers, and is as old as Pecoek's "Repressor." *Droger* is O. E. *drugger*. *Educational* is in Burke. *Feeze* is only a form of *fix*. *To fix*, in the American sense, I find used by the Commissioners of the United Colonies so early as 1675, "their arms well *fixed* and fit for service." *To take the foot in the hand* is German; so is *to go under*. *Gundaloro* is old: I find *gundelo* in Hakluyt, and *gundello* in Booth's reprint of the folio Shakespeare of 1623. *Gonoff* is O. E. *gnoffe*. *Heap* is in "Piers Ploughman" ("and other names an *heap*"), and in Hakluyt ("seeing such a *heap* of their enemies ready to devour them"). *To liquor* is in the "Puritan" ("call 'em in, and liquor 'em a little"). *To loaf*: this, I think, is unquestionably German. *Laufen* is pronounced *lofen* in some parts of Germany, and I once heard one German student say

\* *Domne*, in English, is a decayed gentlewoman of the same family.



to another, *Ich lauf* (lofe) *hier bis du wiederkehrst*, and he began accordingly to saunter up and down, in short, to *loaf*. To *mull*, Mr. Bartlett says, means "to soften, to dispirit," and quotes from "Margaret,"—"There has been a pretty considerable *mullin* going on among the doctors,"—where it surely cannot mean what he says it does. We have always heard *mulling* used for *stirring*, *bustling*, sometimes in an underhand way. It is a metaphor derived probably from *mulling* wine, and the word itself must be a corruption of *mell*, from O. F. *mesler*. *Pair of stairs* is in Hakluyt. To *pull up stakes* is in Curwen's Journal, and therefore pre-Revolutionary. I think I have met with it earlier. *Raise*: under this word Mr. Bartlett omits "to raise a house," that is, the frame of a wooden one, and also the substantive formed from it, a *raisin'*. *Retire for go to bed* is in Fielding's "Amelia." *Setting-poles* cannot be new, for I find "some set [the boats] with long poles" in Hakluyt. *Shoulder-hitters*: I find that *shoulder-striker* is old, though I have lost the reference to my authority. *Snag* is no new word, though perhaps the Western application of it is so; but I find in Gill the proverb, "A bird in the bag is worth two on the snag." Dryden has *swoop* and *to rights*. *Trail*: Hakluyt has "many wayes traied by the wilde beastes."

I subjoin a few phrases not in Mr. Bartlett's book which I have heard. *Bald-headed*: "to go it bald-headed"; in great haste, as where one rushes out without his hat. *Bogue*: "I don't git much done 'thout I bogue right in along 'th my men." *Carry*: a *portage*. *Cat-nap*: a short doze. *Cat-stick*: a small stick. *Chowder-head*: a muddle-brain. *Cling-john*: a soft cake of rye. *Cocoa-nut*: the head. *Cohees*: applied to the people of certain settlements in Western Pennsylvania, from their use of the archaic form *Quo' he*. *Dunnow's I know*: the nearest your true Yankee ever comes to acknowledging ignorance. *Essence-pedler*: a skunk. *First-rate and a half*. *Fish-flakes*, for drying fish: O. E. *fleck* (*cratis*). *Gander-party*: a social gathering of men only. *Gawnicus*: a dolt. *Hawkins's whetstone*: rum; in derision of one Hawkins, a well-known temperance-lecturer. *Hyper*: to bustle: "I mus' hyper about an' git tea." *Keeler-tub*: one in which dishes are washed. ("And Greasy Joan doth keel the pot.") *Lap-tea*: where the guests are too many to sit at table. *Last of pea-time*: to be hard-up. *Löse-laid* (loose-laid): a weaver's term, and probably English; weak-willed.

*Malahack*: to cut up hastily or awkwardly. *Moonglade*: a beautiful word: for the track of moonlight on the water. *Off-ox*: an unmanageable, cross-grained fellow. *Old Driver*, *Old Split-foot*; the Devil. *Onhitich*: to pull trigger (cf. Spanish *disparar*). *Popular*: conceited. *Rote*: sound of surf before a storm. *Rot-gut*: cheap whiskey; the word occurs in Heywood's "English Traveller" and Addison's "Drummer," for a poor kind of drink. *Seem*: it is habitual with the New-Englander to put this verb to strange uses, as, "I can't seem to be suited," "I could n't seem to know him." *Sidehill*, for *hill-side*. *State-house*: this seems an Americanism, whether invented or derived from the Dutch *Stadhuis*, I know not. *Strike and string*: from the game of ninepins; to make a *strike* is to knock down all the pins with one ball, hence it has come to mean fortunate, successful. *Swampers*: men who break out roads for lumberers. *Tormented*: euphemism for damned, as, "not a tormented cent." *Virginia fence*, to make a: to walk like a drunken man.

It is always worth while to note down the erratic words or phrases which one meets with in any dialect. They may throw light on the meaning of other words, on the relationship of languages, or even on history itself. In so composite a language as ours they often supply a different form to express a different shade of meaning, as in *viol* and *fiddle*, *thrud* and *thread*, *smother* and *smoulder*, where the *l* has crept in by a false analogy with *would*. We have given back to England the excellent adjective *lengthy*, formed honestly like *earthy*, *drouthy*, and others, thus enabling their journalists to characterize our President's messages by a word civilly compromising between *long* and *tedious*, so as not to endanger the peace of the two countries by wounding our national sensitiveness to British criticism. Let me give two curious examples of the antiseptic property of dialects at which I have already glanced. Dante has *dindi* as a childish or low word for *danari* (money), and in Shropshire small Roman coins are still dug up which the peasants call *dinders*. This can hardly be a chance coincidence, but seems rather to carry the word back to the Roman soldiery. So our farmers say *chuk*, *chuk*, to their pigs, and *ciacco* is one of the Italian words for *hog*. When a countryman tells us that he "fell all of a heap," I cannot help thinking that he unconsciously points to an affinity between our word *tumble*, and the Latin *tumulus*, that is older than most others. I believe that words, or even the mere

intonation of them, have an astonishing vitality and power of propagation by the root, like the gardener's pest, quitch-grass,\* while the application or combination of them may be new. It is in these last that my countrymen seem to me full of humor, invention, quickness of wit, and that sense of subtle analogy which needs only refining to become fancy and imagination. Prosaic as American life seems in many of its aspects to a European, bleak and bare as it is on the side of tradition, and utterly orphaned of the solemn inspiration of antiquity, I cannot help thinking that the ordinary talk of unlettered men among us is fuller of metaphor and of phrases that suggest lively images than that of any other people I have seen. Very many such will be found in Mr. Bartlett's book, though his short list of proverbs at the end seem to me, with one or two exceptions, as un-American as possible. Most of them have no character at all but coarseness, and are quite too long-skirted for working proverbs, in which language always "takes off its coat to it," as a Yankee would say. There are plenty that have a more native and puckery flavor, seedlings from the old stock often, and yet new varieties. One hears such not seldom among us Easterners, and the West would yield many more. "Mean enough to steal acorns from a blind hog"; "Cold as the north side of a Jenooary gravestone by starlight"; "Hungry as a graven image"; "Pop'lar as a hen with one chicken"; "A hen's time ain't much"; "Quicker 'n greased lightnin'"; "Ther's sech a thing ez bein' *tu*" (our Yankee paraphrase of *μῆτις ἀγὰρ*); hence the phrase *tooin' round*, meaning a supererogatory activity like that of flies; "Stingy enough to skim his milk at both ends"; "Hot as the Devil's kitchen"; "Handy as a pocket in a shirt"; "He's a whole team and the dog under the wagon"; "All deacons are good, but ther's odds in deacons" (to *deacon* berries is to put the largest atop); "So thievish they hev to take in their stone walls nights"; † may serve as specimens. "I take my tea *barfoot*," said a backwoodsman when asked if he would have cream and sugar. (I find *barfoot*, by the way, in the Coventry Plays.) A man speaking to me once of a very rocky clearing said, "Stone's got a pretty heavy mortgage on that land," and I overheard

a guide in the woods say to his companions who were urging him to sing, "Wal, I *did* sing once, but toons gut invented, an' thet spill my trade." Whoever has driven over a stream by a bridge made of *slabs* will feel the picturesque force of the epithet *slab-bridged* applied to a fellow of shaky character. Almost every county has some good die-sinker in phrase, whose mintage passes into the currency of the whole neighborhood. Such a one described the county jail (the one stone building where all the dwellings are of wood) as "the house whose underpinnin' come up to the eaves," and called hell "the place where they didn't rake up their fires nights." I once asked a stage-driver if the other side of a hill were as steep as the one we were climbing: "Steep? chain lightnin' could n' go down it 'thout puttin' the shoe on!" And this brings me back to the exaggeration of which I spoke before. To me there is something very taking in the negro "so black that charcoal made a chalk-mark on him," and the wooden shingle "painted so like marble that it sank in water," as if its very consciousness or its vanity had been overpersuaded by the cunning of the painter. I heard a man, in order to give a notion of some very cold weather, say to another that a certain Joe, who had been taking mercury, found a lump of quicksilver in each boot, when he went home to dinner. This power of rapidly dramatizing a dry fact into flesh and blood and the vivid conception of Joe as a human thermometer strike me as showing a poetic sense that may be refined into faculty. At any rate there is humor here, and not mere quickness of wit, — the deeper and not the shallower quality. The *tendency* of humor is always towards overplus of expression, while the very essence of wit is its logical precision. Captain Basil Hall denied that our people had any humor, deceived, perhaps, by their gravity of manner. But this very seriousness is often the outward sign of that humorous quality of the mind which delights in finding an element of identity in things seemingly the most incongruous, and then again in forcing an incongruity upon things identical. Perhaps Captain Hall had no humor himself, and if so he would never find it. Did he always feel the point of what was said to himself? I doubt it, because I happen to know a chance he once had given him in vain. The Captain was walking up and down the veranda of a country tavern in Massachusetts while the coach changed horses. A thunder-storm was going on, and, with that pleas-

\* Which, whether in that form, or under its aliases *witch-grass* and *couch-grass*, points us back to its original Saxon *quick*.

† And, by the way, the Yankee never says "o' nights," but uses the older adverbial form, analogous to the German *nachts*.



ant European air of indirect self-compliment in condescending to be surprised by American merit, which we find so conciliating, he said to a countryman lounging against the door, "Pretty heavy thunder you have here." The other, who had divined at a glance his feeling of generous concession to a new country, drawled gravely, "Waal, we *du*, considerin' the number of inhabitants." This, the more I analyze it, the more humorous does it seem. The same man was capable of wit also, when he would. He was a cabinet-maker, and was once employed to make some commandment-tables for the parish meeting-house. The parson, a very old man, annoyed him by looking into his workshop every morning, and cautioning him to be very sure to pick out "clear mahogany without any *knots* in it." At last, wearied out, he retorted one day: "Wal, Dr. B., I guess ef I was to leave the *nots* out o' some o' the c'man'ments, 't 'ould soot you full ez wal!"

If I had taken the pains to write down the proverbial or pithy phrases I have heard, or if I had sooner thought of noting the Yankeeisms I met with in my reading, I might have been able to do more justice to my theme. But I have done all I wished in respect to pronunciation, if I have proved that where we are vulgar, we have the countenance of very good company. For, as to the *jus et norma loquendi*, I agree with Horace and those who have paraphrased or commented him, from Boileau to Gray. I think that a good rule for style is Galiani's definition of sublime oratory, — "l'art de tout dire sans être mis à la Bastille dans un pays où il est défendu de rien dire." I profess myself a fanatical purist, but with a hearty contempt for the speech-gilders who affect purism without any thorough, or even pedagogic, knowledge of the engendure, growth, and affinities of the noble language about whose *mésalliances* they profess (like Dean Alford) to be so solicitous. If they had their way —! "Doch es sey," says Lessing, "dass jene gothische Höflichkeit eine unentbehrliche Tugend des heutigen Umganges ist. Soll sie darum unsere Schriften eben so schaal und falsch machen als unsern Umgang?" And Drayton was not far wrong in affirming that

"T is possible to climb,  
To kindle, or to slake,  
Although in Skelton's rhyme."

Cumberland in his Memoirs tells us that when, in the midst of Admiral Rodney's great sea-fight, Sir Charles Douglas said

to him, "Behold, Sir George, the Greeks and Trojans contending for the body of Patroclus!" the Admiral answered, peevishly, "Damn the Greeks and damn the Trojans! I have other things to think of." After the battle was won, Rodney thus to Sir Charles, "Now, my dear friend, I am at the service of your Greeks and Trojans, and the whole of Homer's Iliad, or as much of it as you please!" I had some such feeling of the impertinence of our pseudo-classicality when I chose our homely dialect to work in. Should we be nothing, because somebody had contrived to be something (and that perhaps in a provincial dialect) ages ago? and to be nothing by our very attempt to be that something, which they had already been, and which therefore nobody could be again without being a bore? Is there no way left, then, I thought, of being natural, of being *naïf*, which means nothing more than native, of belonging to the age and country in which you are born? The Yankee, at least, is a new phenomenon; let us try to be *that*. It is perhaps a *pis aller*, but is not *No Thoroughfare* written up everywhere else? In the literary world, things seemed to me very much as they were in the latter half of the last century. Pope, skimming the cream of good sense and expression wherever he could find it, had made, not exactly poetry, but an honest, salable butter of worldly wisdom which pleasantly lubricated some of the drier morsels of life's daily bread, and, seeing this, scores of harmlessly insane people went on for the next fifty years coaxing his buttermilk with the regular up and down of the pentameter churn. And in our day do we not scent everywhere, and even carry away in our clothes against our will, that faint perfume of musk which Mr. Tennyson has left behind him, or worse, of Heine's *patchouli*? And might it not be possible to escape them by turning into one of our narrow New England lanes, shut in though it were by bleak stone walls on either hand, and where no better flowers were to be gathered than golden-rod and hardhack?

Beside the advantage of getting out of the beaten track, our dialect offered others hardly inferior. As I was about to make an endeavor to state them, I remembered something that the clear-sighted Goethe had said about Hebel's *Allemannische Gedichte*, which, making proper deduction for special reference to the book under review, expresses what I would have said far better than I could hope to do: "Allen diesen innern guten Eigenschaften kommt



die behagliche naive Sprache sehr zu staten. Man findet mehrere sinnliche bedeutende und wohlklingende Worte . . . von einem, zwei Buchstaben, Abbreviationen, Contractionen, viele kurze, leichte Sylben, neue Reime, welches, mehr als man glaubt, ein Vortheil für den Dichter ist. Diese Elemente werden durch glückliche Constructionen und lebhaft Formen zu einem Styl zusammengedrängt der zu diesem Zwecke vor unserer 'Büchersprache grosse Vorzüge hat." Of course I do not mean to imply that I have come near achieving any such success as the great critic here indicates, but I think the success is *there*, and to be plucked by some more fortunate hand.

Nevertheless, I was encouraged by the approval of many whose opinions I valued. With a feeling too tender and grateful to be mixed with any vanity, I mention as one of these the late A. H. Clough, who more than any one of those I have known (no longer living), except Hawthorne, impressed me with the constant presence of that indefinable thing we call genius. He often suggested that I should try my hand at some Yankee Pastorals, which would admit of more sentiment and a higher tone without foregoing the advantage offered by the dialect. I have never completed anything of the kind, but, in this Second Series, both my remembrance of his counsel and the deeper feeling called up by the great interests at stake, led me to venture some passages nearer to what is called poetical than could have been admitted without incongruity into the former series. The time seemed calling to me, with the old poet, —

"Leave, then, your wonted prattle  
The oaten reed forbear;  
For I hear a sound of battle,  
And trumpets, rend the air!"

The only attempt I had ever made at anything like a pastoral (if that may be called an attempt which was the result almost of pure accident) was in "The Courtin'." While the introduction to the First Series was going through the press, I received word from the printer that there was a blank page left which must be filled. I sat down at once and improvised another fictitious "notice of the press," in which, because verse would fill up space more cheaply than prose, I inserted an extract from a supposed ballad of Mr. Biglow. I kept no copy of it, and the printer, as directed, cut it off when the gap was filled. Presently I began to receive letters asking for the rest of it, sometimes for the *balance* of it. I had

none, but to answer such demands, I patched a conclusion upon it in a later edition. Those who had only the first continued to importune me. Afterward, being asked to write it out as an autograph for the Baltimore Sanitary Commission Fair, I added other verses, into some of which I infused a little more sentiment in a homely way, and after a fashion completed it by sketching in the characters and making a connected story. Most likely I have spoiled it, but I shall put it at the end of this Introduction, to answer once for all those kindly importunings.

As I have seen extracts from what purported to be writings of Mr. Biglow, which were not genuine, I may properly take this opportunity to say, that the two volumes now published contain every line I ever printed under that pseudonyme, and that I have never, so far as I can remember, written an anonymous article (elsewhere than in the *North American Review* and the *Atlantic Monthly*, during my editorship of it) except a review of Mrs. Stowe's "Minister's Wooing," and, some twenty years ago, a sketch of the antislavery movement in America for an English journal.

A word more on pronunciation. I have endeavored to express this so far as I could by the types, taking such pains as, I fear, may sometimes make the reading harder than need be. At the same time, by studying uniformity I have sometimes been obliged to sacrifice minute exactness. The emphasis often modifies the habitual sound. For example, *for* is commonly *fer* (a shorter sound than *fur* for *far*), but when emphatic it always becomes *for*, as "wut *for*!" So *too* is pronounced like *to* (as it was anciently spelt), and *to* like *ta* (the sound as in the *tau* of *touch*), but *too*, when emphatic, changes into *tue*, and *to*, sometimes, in similar cases, into *toe*, as, "I did n' hardly know wut *toe* du!" Where vowels come together, or one precedes another following an aspirate, the two melt together, as was common with the older poets who formed their versification on French or Italian models. Drayton is thoroughly Yankee when he says "I 'xpect," and Pope when he says "'t' inspire." *With* becomes sometimes 'ith, 'äth, or 'th, or even disappears wholly where it comes before *the*, as, "I went along th' Square" (along with the Squire), the *are* sound being an archaism which I have noticed also in *choir*, like the old Scottish *quhair*.\* (Herrick has,

\* Greene, in his *Quip for an Upstart Courtier* says, "to square it up and downe the streetes before his mistresse."

"Of flowers ne'er sucked by th' theiving bee.") *Without* becomes *alhout* and *'thout*. *Afterwards* always retains its locative *s*, and is pronounced always *ah'terwurds*, with a strong accent on the last syllable. This oddity has some support in the erratic *towards* instead of *to'wards*, which we find in the poets and sometimes hear. The sound given to the first syllable of *to'wards*, I may remark, sustains the Yankee lengthening of the *o* in *to*. At the beginning of a sentence, *ah'terwurds* has the accent on the first syllable; at the end of one, on the last; as, "ah'terwurds' he tol' me," "he tol' me ah'terwurds'." The Yankee never makes a mistake in his aspirates. *U* changes in many words to *e*, always in *such*, *brush*, *tush*, *hush*, *rush*, *blush*, seldom in *much*, oftener in *trust* and *crust*, never in *mush*, *gust*, *bust*, *tumble*, or (?) *flush*, in the latter case probably to avoid confusion with *flesh*. I have heard *flush* with the *z* sound, however. For the same reason, I suspect, never in *gush* (at least, I never heard it), because we have already one *gash* for *gash*. *A* and *i* short frequently become *e* short. *U* always becomes *o* in the prefix *un* (except *unto*), and *o* in return changes to *u* short in *wo* for *of*, and in some words beginning with *om*. *T* and *d*, *b* and *p*, *v* and *w*, remain intact. So much occurs to me in addition to what I said in this head in the preface to the former volume.

Of course in what I have said I wish to be understood as keeping in mind the difference between provincialisms properly so called and *slang*. *Slang* is always vulgar, because it is not a natural but an affected way of talking, and all mere tricks of speech or writing are offensive. I do not think that Mr. Biglow can be fairly charged with vulgarity, and I should have entirely failed in my design, if I had not made it appear that high and even refined sentiment may coexist with the shrewder and more comic elements of the Yankee character. I believe that what is essentially vulgar and mean-spirited in politics seldom has its source in the body of the people, but much rather among those who are made timid by their wealth or selfish by their love of power. A democracy can afford much better than an aristocracy to follow out its convictions, and is perhaps better qualified to build those convictions on plain principles of right and wrong, rather than on the shifting sands of expediency. I had always thought "Sam Slick" a libel on the Yankee character, and a complete falsification of Yankee modes of speech, though, for aught I know, it may be true

in both respects so far as the British provinces are concerned. To me the dialect was native, was spoken all about me when a boy, at a time when an Irish day-laborer was as rare as an American one now. Since then I have made a study of it so far as opportunity allowed. But when I write in it, it is as in a mother tongue, and I am carried back far beyond any studies of it to long-ago nooningings in my father's hay-fields, and to the talk of Sam and Job over their jug of *blackstrap* under the shadow of the ash-tree which still dapples the grass whence they have been gone so long.

But life is short, and prefaces should be. And so, my good friends, to whom this introductory epistle is addressed, farewell. Though some of you have remonstrated with me, I shall never write any more "Biglow Paperz," however great the temptation,—great especially at the present time,—unless it be to complete the original plan of this Series by bringing out Mr. Sawin as an "original Union man." The very favor with which they have been received is a hindrance to me, by forcing on me a self-consciousness from which I was entirely free when I wrote the First Series. Moreover, I am no longer the same careless youth, with nothing to do but live to myself, my books, and my friends, that I was then. I always hated politics, in the ordinary sense of the word, and I am not likely to grow fonder of them, now that I have learned how rare it is to find a man who can keep principle clear from party and personal prejudice, or can conceive the possibility of another's doing so. I feel as if I could in some sort claim to be an *emeritus*, and I am sure that political satire will have full justice done it by that genuine and delightful humorist, the Rev. Petroleum V. Nasby. I regret that I killed off Mr. Wilbur so soon, for he would have enabled me to bring into this preface a number of learned quotations, which must now go a-begging, and also enabled me to dispersonalize myself into a vicarious egotism. He would have helped me likewise in clearing myself from a charge which I shall briefly touch on, because my friend Mr. Hughes has found it needful to defend me in his preface to one of the English editions of the "Biglow Papers." I thank Mr. Hughes heartily for his friendly care of my good name, and were his Preface accessible to my readers here (as I am glad it is not, for its partiality makes me blush), I should leave the matter where he left it. The charge is of profanity, brought in by persons who proclaimed African slavery

of Divine institution, and is based (so far as I have heard) on two passages in the First Series—

“An’ you’ve gat to git up airly,  
Ef you want to take in God,”

and,

“God’ll send the bill to you,”

and on some Scriptural illustrations by Mr. Sawin.

Now, in the first place, I was writing under an assumed character, and must talk as the person would whose mouthpiece I made myself. Will any one familiar with the New England countryman venture to tell me that he does *not* speak of sacred things familiarly? that Biblical allusions (allusions, that is, to the single book with whose language, from his church-going habits, he is intimate) are *not* frequent on his lips? If so, he cannot have pursued his studies of the character on so many long-ago muster-fields and at so many cattle-shows as I. But I scorn any such line of defence, and will confess at once that one of the things I am proud of in my countrymen is (I am not speaking now of such persons as I have assumed Mr. Sawin to be) that they do not put their Maker away far from them, or interpret the fear of God into being afraid of Him. The Talmudists had conceived a deep truth when they said, that “all things were in the power of God, save the fear of God”; and when people stand in great dread of an invisible power, I suspect they mistake quite another personage for the Deity. I might justify myself for the passages criticised by many parallel ones from Scripture, but I need not. The Reverend Homer Wilbur’s note-books supply me with three apposite quotations. The first is from a Father of the Roman Church, the second from a Father of the Anglican, and the third from a Father of Modern English poetry. The Puritan divines would furnish me with many more such. St. Bernard says, *Sapiens nummularius est Deus: nummum fictum non recipiet*; “A cunning money-changer is God: he will take in no base coin.” Latimer says, “You shall perceive that God, by this example, shaketh us by the noses and taketh us by the ears.” Familiar enough, both of them, one would say! But I should think Mr. Biglow had verily stolen the last of the two maligned passages from Dryden’s “Don Sebastian,” where I find

“And beg of Heaven to charge the bill on me!”

And there I leave the matter, being willing to believe that the Saint, the Martyr,

and even the Poet, were as careful of God’s honor as my critics are ever likely to be.

J. R. L.

### THE COURTIN’.

God makes sech nights, all white an’ still

Fur ’z you can look or listen,  
Moonshine an’ snow on field an’ hill,  
All silence an’ all glisten.

Zekle crep’ up quite unbeknown  
An’ peeked in thru’ the winder,  
An’ there sot Huldy all alone,  
’ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room’s one side  
With half a cord o’ wood in—  
There warn’t no stoves (tell comfort died)  
To bake ye to a puddin’.

The wa’nut logs shot sparkles out  
Towards the pootiest, bless her,  
An’ leetle flames danced all about  
The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,  
An’ in amongst ’em rusted  
The ole queen’s-arm thet gran’ther  
Young  
Fetched back from Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,  
Seemed warm from floor to ceilin’,  
An’ she looked full ez rosy agin  
Ez the apples she was peelin’.

’T was kin’ o’ kingdom-come to look  
On sech a blessed cretur,  
A dogrose blushin’ to a brook  
Ain’t modester nor sweeter.

He was six foot o’ man, A I,  
Clear grit an’ human natur’;  
None could n’t quicker pitch a tor.  
Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He’d sparked it with full twenty gals,  
Hed squired ’em, danced ’em, druv  
’em,



Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells—  
All is, he could n't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run  
All crinkly like curled maple,  
The side she breshed felt full o' sun  
Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing  
Ez him in the choir;  
My! when he made Ole Hunderd ring,  
She *knowed* the Lord was nigher.

An' she 'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,  
When her new meetin'-bunnet  
Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair  
O' blue eyes sot upon it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *some!*  
She seemed to 've gut a new soul,  
For she felt sartin-sure he 'd come,  
Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,  
A-raspin' on the scraper,—  
All ways to once her feelins flew  
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,  
Some doubtffe o' the sekle,  
His heart kep' goin' pity-pat,  
But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yit she gin her cheer a jerk  
Ez though she wished him furdur,  
An' on her apples kep' to work,  
Parin' away like murder.

“You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?”  
“Wal . . . . no . . . . I come da-  
signin'”—

“To see my Ma? She 's sprinklin'  
clo'es  
Agin to-morrer's i'nin'.”

To say why gals acts so or so,  
Or don't, 'ould be presumin';  
Mebby to mean *yes* an' say *no*  
Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,  
Then stood a spell on t' other,  
An' on which one he felt the wust  
He could n't ha' told ye nuther.

Says he, “I 'd better call agin”;  
Says she, “Think likely, Mister”:  
Thet last word pricked him like a pin,  
An' . . . . Wal, he up an' kist her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,  
Huldy sot pale ez ashes,  
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips  
An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind  
Whose naturs never vary,  
Like streams that keep a summer mind  
Snowhid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued  
Too tight for all expressin',  
Tell mother see how metters stood,  
An' gin 'em both her blessin'.

Then her red come back like the tide  
Down to the Bay o' Fundy,  
An' all I know is they was cried  
In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

# THE BIGLOW PAPERS.

No. I.

BIRD OF FREDUM SAWIN, ESQ., TO  
MR. HOSEA BIGLOW.

LETTER FROM THE REVEREND HOMER WILBUR, M. A., ENCLOSING THE EPISTLE AFORESAID.

JAALAM, 15th Nov., 1861.

\* \* \* \* \*

It is not from any idle wish to obtrude my humble person with undue prominence upon the publick view that I resume my pen upon the present occasion. *Juniores ad labores.* But having been a main instrument in rescuing the talent of my young parishioner from being buried in the ground, by giving it such warrant with the world as could be derived from a name already widely known by several printed discourses (all of which I may be permitted without immodesty to state have been deemed worthy of preservation in the Library of Harvard College by my esteemed friend Mr. Sibley), it seemed becoming that I should not only testify to the genuineness of the following production, but call attention to it, the more as Mr. Biglow had so long been silent as to be in danger of absolute oblivion. I insinuate no claim to any share in the authorship (*vix ea nostra voco*) of the works already published by Mr. Biglow, but merely take to myself the credit of having fulfilled toward them the office of taster (*experto crede*), who, having first tried, could afterward bear witness (*credenzen*) it was aptly named by the Germans), an office always arduous, and sometimes even dangerous, as in the case of those devoted persons who venture their lives in the deglutition of patent medicines (*dotus latet in generalibus*, there is deceit in the most of them) and thereafter are wonderfully preserved long enough to append their signatures to testimonials in the diurnal and hebdomadal prints. I say not this as covertly glancing at the authors of certain

manuscripts which have been submitted to my literary judgment (though an epic in twenty-four books on the "Taking of Jericho" might, save for the prudent forethought of Mrs. Wilbur in secreting the same just as I had arrived beneath the walls and was beginning a catalogue of the various horns and their blowers, too ambitiously emulous in longanimity of Homer's list of ships, might, I say, have rendered frustrate any hope I could entertain *vacare Musis* for the small remainder of my days), but only the further to secure myself against any imputation of unseemly forthputting. I will barely subjoin, in this connexion, that, whereas Job was left to desire, in the soreness of his heart, that his adversary had written a book, as perchance misanthropically wishing to indite a review thereof, yet was not Satan allowed so far to tempt him as to send Bildad, Eliphaz, and Zophar each with an unprinted work in his wallet to be submitted to his censure. But of this enough. Were I in need of other excuse, I might add that I write by the express desire of Mr. Biglow himself, whose entire winter leisure is occupied, as he assures me, in answering demands for autographs, a labor exacting enough in itself, and egregiously so to him, who, being no ready penman, cannot sign so much as his name without strange contortions of the face (his nose, even, being essential to complete success) and painfully suppressed Saint-Vitus-dance of every muscle in his body. This, with his having been put in the Commission of the Peace by our excellent Governor (*O, si sic omnes!*) immediately on his accession to office, keeps him continually employed. *Haud inexpertus loquor*, having for many years written myself J. P., and being not seldom applied to for specimens of my chirography, a request to which I have sometimes over weakly assented, believing as I do that nothing written of set purpose can properly be called an autograph, but only those unpremeditated sallies and lively runnings which betray the fireside Man instead

of the hunted Notoriety doubling on his pursuers. But it is time that I should bethink me of St. Austin's prayer, *libera me a meipso*, if I would arrive at the matter in hand.

Moreover, I had yet another reason for taking up the pen myself. I am informed that the *Atlantic Monthly* is mainly indebted for its success to the contributions and editorial supervision of Dr. Holmes, whose excellent "Annals of America" occupy an honored place upon my shelves. The journal itself I have never seen; but if this be so, it might seem that the recommendation of a brother-clergyman (though *par magis quam similis*) should carry a greater weight. I suppose that you have a department for historical lucubrations, and should be glad, if deemed desirable, to forward for publication my "Collections for the Antiquities of Jaalam," and my (now happily complete) pedigree of the Wilbur family from its *fons et origo*, the Wild Boar of Ardennes. Withdrawn from the active duties of my profession by the settlement of a colleague-pastor, the Reverend Jeduthun Hitchcock, formerly of Brutus Four-Corners, I might find time for further contributions to general literature on similar topics. I have made large advances towards a completer genealogy of Mrs. Wilbur's family, the Pilcoxes, not, if I know myself, from any idle vanity, but with the sole desire of rendering myself useful in my day and generation. *Nulla dies sine linea*. I inclose a meteorological register, a list of the births, deaths, and marriages, and a few *memorabilia* of longevity in Jaalam East Parish for the last half-century. Though spared to the unusual period of more than eighty years, I find no diminution of my faculties or abatement of my natural vigor, except a scarcely sensible decay of memory and a necessity of recurring to younger eyesight or spectacles for the finer print in Cruden. It would gratify me to make some further provision for declining years from the emoluments of my literary labors. I had intended to effect an insurance on my life, but was deterred therefrom by a circular from one of the offices, in which the sudden death of so large a proportion of the insured was set forth as an inducement, that it seemed to me little less than a tempting of Providence. *Næque in summâ inopiâ levis esse senectus potest, ne sapienti quidem*.

Thus far concerning Mr. Biglow; and so much seemed needful (*brevis esse laboro*) by way of preliminary, after a silence of fourteen years. He greatly fears lest he may in this essay have fallen below himself, well knowing that, if exercise be dan-

gerous on a full stomach, no less so is writing on a full reputation. Beset as he has been on all sides, he could not refrain, and would only imprecate patience till he shall again have "got the hang" (as he calls it) of an accomplishment long disused. The letter of Mr. Sawin was received some time in last June, and others have followed which will in due season be submitted to the publick. How largely his statements are to be depended on, I more than merely dubitate. He was always distinguished for a tendency to exaggeration, — it might almost be qualified by a stronger term. *Fortiter mentire, aliquid hæret*, seemed to be his favourite rule of rhetoric. That he is actually where he says he is the post-mark would seem to confirm; that he was received with the publick demonstrations he describes would appear consonant with what we know of the habits of those regions; but further than this I venture not to decide. I have sometimes suspected a vein of humor in him which leads him to speak by contraries; but since, in the unrestrained intercourse of private life, I have never observed in him any striking powers of invention, I am the more willing to put a certain qualified faith in the incidents and the details of life and manners which give to his narratives some portion of the interest and entertainment which characterizes a Century Sermon.

It may be expected of me that I should say something to justify myself with the world for a seeming inconsistency with my well-known principles in allowing my youngest son to raise a company for the war, a fact known to all through the medium of the publick prints. I did reason with the young man, but *expellas naturam furcâ, tamen usque recurrit*. Having myself been a chaplain in 1812, I could the less wonder that a man of war had sprung from my loins. It was, indeed, grievous to send my Benjamin, the child of my old age; but after the discomfiture of Manassas, I with my own hands did buckle on his armour, trusting in the great Comforter and Commander for strength according to my need. For truly the memory of a brave son dead in his shroud were a greater staff of my declining years than a living coward (if those may be said to have lived who carry all of themselves into the grave with them), though his days might be long in the land, and he should get much goods. It is not till our earthen vessels are broken that we find and truly possess the treasure that was laid up in them. *Migravi in animam meam*, I have sought refuge in my own soul; nor would I be shamed by the



heathen comedian with his *Nequam illud verbum, bene vult, nisi bene facit*. During our dark days, I read constantly in the inspired book of Job, which I believe to contain more food to maintain the fibre of the soul for right living and high thinking than all pagan literature together, though I would by no means vilipend the study of the classicks. There I read that Job said in his despair, even as the fool saith in his heart there is no God, — The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure." (*Job xii. 6.*) But I sought farther till I found this Scripture also, which I would have those perpend who have striven to turn our Israel aside to the worship of strange gods: — "If I did despise the cause of my man-servant or of my maid-servant when they contended with me, what then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?" (*Job xxxi. 13, 14.*) On this text I preached a discourse on the last day of Fasting and Humiliation with general acceptance, though there were not wanting one or two Laodiceans who said that I should have waited till the President announced his policy. But let us hope and pray, remembering this of Saint Gregory, *Vult Deus rogari, vult cogi, vult quâdam importunitate vinci.*

We had our first fall of snow on Friday last. Frosts have been unusually backward this fall. A singular circumstance occurred in this town on the 20th October, in the family of Deacon Pelatiah Tinkham. On the previous evening, a few moments before family prayers,

\* \* \* \* \*

[The editors of the *Atlantic* find it necessary here to cut short the letter of their valued correspondent, which seemed calculated rather on the rates of longevity in Jaalam than for less favored localities. They have every encouragement to hope that he will write again.]

With esteem and respect,

Your obedient servant,

HOMER WILBUR, A. M.

It's some consid'ble of a spell sence I hain't writ no letters,  
An' ther' s gret changes hez took place in all polit'cle matters;  
Some canderdates air dead an' gone, an' some hez ben defeated,  
Which 'mounts to pooty much the same; fer it's ben proved repeated  
A betch o' bread thet hain't riz once ain't goin' to rise agin,

An' it's jest money throwed away to put the emptins in:  
But thet's wut folks wun't never larn; they dunno how to go,  
Arter you want their room, no more'n a bullet-headed beau;  
Ther' s ollers chaps a-hangin' roun' thet can't see peatime's past,  
Mis'ble as roosters in a rain, heads down an' tails half-mast:  
It ain't disgraceful bein' beat, when a holl nation doos it,  
But Chance is like an amberill, — it don't take twice to lose it.

I spose you're kin' o' cur'ous, now, to know why I hain't writ.  
Wal, I've ben where a litt'ry taste don't somehow seem to git  
Th' encouragement a feller'd think, thet's used to public schools,  
An' where sech things ez paper 'n ink air clean agin the rules:  
A kind o' vic'varsy house, built dreffle strong an' stout,  
So's 't honest people can't get in, ner t' other sort git out,  
An' with the winders so contrived, you'd prob'ly like the view  
Better alookin' in than out, though it seems sing'lar, tu;  
But then the landlord sets by ye, can't bear ye out o' sight,  
And locks ye up ez reg'lar ez an outside door at night.

This world is awfle contrary: the rope may stretch your neck  
Thet mebbly kep' another chap frum washin' off a wreck;  
An' you may see the taters grow in one poor feller's patch,  
So small no self-respectin' hen thet valied time 'ould scratch,  
So small the rot can't find 'em out, an' then agin, nex' door,  
Ez big ez wut hogs dream on when they're 'most too fat to snore.  
But groutin' ain't no kin' o' use; an' ef the fust throw fails,  
Why, up an' try agin, thet's all, — the coppers ain't all tails;  
Though I hev seen 'em when I thought they hed n't no more head  
Than 'd sarve a nussin' Brigadier thet gits some ink to shed.

When I writ last, I'd ben turned loose  
 by thet blamed nigger, Pomp,  
 Ferlorner than a musquash, ef you'd  
 took an' dreened his swamp:  
 But I ain't o' the meechin' kind, thet  
 sets an' thinks fer weeks  
 The bottom's out o' th' univarse coz  
 their own gillpot leaks.  
 I hed to cross bayous an' criks, (wal, it  
 did beat all natur',)  
 Upon a kin' o' corderoy, fust log, then  
 alligator;  
 Luck'ly, the critters warn't sharp-sot;  
 I guess 't wuz overruled  
 They'd done their mornin's marketin'  
 an' gut their hunger cooled;  
 Fer missionaries to the Creeks an' run-  
 aways are viewed  
 By them an' folks ez sent express to be  
 their reg'lar food;  
 Wutever 't wuz, they laid an' snoozed  
 ez peacefully ez sinners,  
 Meek ez disgestin' deacons be at ordina-  
 tion dinners;  
 Ef any on 'em turned an' snapped, I  
 let 'em kin' o' taste  
 My live-oak leg, an' so, ye see, ther'  
 warn't no gret o' waste;  
 Fer they found out in quicker time than  
 ef they'd ben to college  
 'T warn't heartier food than though't wuz  
 made out o' the tree o' knowledge.  
 But I tell *you* my other leg hed larned  
 wut pizon-nettle meant,  
 An' var'ous other usefle things, afore I  
 reached a settlement,  
 An' all o' me thet wuz n't sore an'  
 sendin' prickles thru me  
 Wuz jest the leg I parted with in lickin'  
 Montezumy:  
 A useful limb it's ben to me, an' more  
 of a support  
 Than wut the other hez ben, — coz I  
 dror my pension for 't.

Wal, I gut in at last where folks wuz  
 civerlized an' white,  
 Ez I diskivered to my cost afore 't warn't  
 hardly night;  
 Fer 'z I wuz settin' in the bar a-takin'  
 sunthin' hot,  
 An' feelin' like a man agin, all over in  
 one spot,  
 A feller thet sot oppersite, arter a squint  
 at me,  
 Lep up an' drewed his peacemaker, an',  
 "Dash it, Sir," suz he,

"I'm doubledashed ef you ain't him  
 thet stole my yaller chettle,  
 (You're all the stranger thet 's around,)  
 so now you've gut to settle;  
 It ain't no use to argerfy ner try to cut  
 up frisky,  
 I know ye ez I know the smell of ole  
 chain-lightnin' whiskey;  
 We're lor-abidin' folks down here, we'll  
 fix ye so 's 't a bar  
 Would n' tech ye with a ten-foot pole;  
 (Jedge, you jest warm the tar;)  
 You'll think you'd better ha' gut among  
 a tribe o' Mongrel Tartars,  
 'fore we've done showin' how we raise  
 our Southun prize tar-martyrs;  
 A moultin' fallen cherubim, ef he should  
 see ye, 'd snicker,  
 Thinkin' he warn't a suckemstance.  
 Come, genlemun, le' 's liquor;  
 An', Gin'ral, when you've mixed the  
 drinks an' chalked 'em up, tote  
 roun'  
 An' see ef ther' 's a feather-bed (thet 's  
 borryable) in town  
 We'll try ye fair, ole Grafted-Leg, an'  
 ef the tar wun't stick,  
 Th' ain't not a juror here but wut 'll  
 'quit ye double-quick."  
 To cut it short, I wun't say sweet, they  
 gi' me a good dip,  
 (They ain't *perfessin'* Bahptists here,)  
 then give the bed a rip, —  
 The jury 'd sot, an' quicker 'n a flash  
 they hatched me out, a livin'  
 Extemp'ry mammoth turkey-chick fer a  
 Fejee Thanksgivin'.  
 Thet I felt some stuck up is wut it's  
 nat'ral to suppose,  
 When poppylar enthusiasm hed fun-  
 nished me sech clo'es;  
 (Ner 't ain't without edvantiges, this  
 kin' o' suit, ye see,  
 It's water-proof, an' water's wut I like  
 kep' out o' me;)  
 But nut content with thet, they took a  
 kerridge from the fence  
 An' rid me roun' to see the place, enti-  
 rely free 'f expense,  
 With forty-leven new kines o' sarse  
 without no charge acquainted me,  
 Gi' me three cheers, an' vowed thet I  
 wuz all their fahncy painted me;  
 They treated me to all their eggs; (they  
 keep 'em I should think,  
 Fer sech ovations, pooty long, for they  
 wuz mos' distinc';)

They starred me thick 'z the Milky-Way  
 with indiscrim'nit cherity,  
 Fer wut we call reception eggs air sun-  
 thin' of a reity;  
 Green ones is plentiful enough, skurce  
 with a nigger's getherin',  
 But your dead-ripe ones ranges high fer  
 treatin' Nothun bretherin;  
 A spotteder, ringstreakeder child the'  
 warn't in Uncle Sam's  
 Holl farm, — a cross of stripèd pig an'  
 one o' Jacob's lambs;  
 'T wuz Dannil in the lions' den, new an'  
 enlarged edition,  
 An' everythin' fust-rate o' 'ts kind; the'  
 warn't no impersition.  
 People's impulsiver down here than wut  
 our folks to home be,  
 An' kin' o' go it 'ith a resh in raisin'  
 Hail Columby:  
 Thet's so: an' they swarmed out like  
 bees, for your real Southun men's  
 Time is n't o' much more account than  
 an ole settin' hen's;  
 (They jest work semioccashnally, or else  
 don't work at all,  
 An' so their time an' 'tention both air at  
 saci'ty's call.)  
 Talk about hospitality! wut Nothun  
 town d' ye know  
 Would take a tole stranger up an' treat  
 him gratis so?  
 You 'd better b'lieve ther' 's nothin' like  
 this spendin' days an' nights  
 Along 'ith a dependent race fer civerliz-  
 in' whites.  
 But this wuz all prelim'nary; it 's so  
 Gran' Jurors here  
 Fin' a true bill, a hendier way than  
 ourn, an' nut so dear;  
 So arter this they sentenced me, to make  
 all tight 'n' snug,  
 Afore a reg'lar court o' law, to ten years  
 in the Jug.  
 I did n't make no gret defence: you  
 don't feel much like speakin',  
 When, ef you let your clamshells gape,  
 a quart o' tar will leak in:  
 I hev hearn tell o' wingèd words, but  
 pint o' fact it tethers  
 The spoutin' gift to hev your words tu  
 thick sot on with feathers,  
 An' Choate ner Webster would n't ha'  
 made an A 1 kin' o' speech  
 Astride a Southun chestnut horse sharp-  
 er 'n a baby's screech.

Two year ago they ketched the thief, 'n'  
 seen' I wuz innercent,  
 They jest uncorked an' le' me run, an'  
 in my stid the sinner sent  
 To see how *he* liked pork 'n' pone flav-  
 ored with wa'nut saplin',  
 An' nary social priv'ledge but a one-hoss,  
 starn-wheel chaplin.  
 When I come out, the folks behaved  
 mos' gen'manly an' harnsome;  
 They 'lowed it would n't be more n  
 right, ef I should cuss 'n' darn  
 some:  
 The Cunnle he apolergized; suz he,  
 "I'll du wut 's right,  
 I'll give ye settisfaction now by shootin'  
 ye at sight,  
 An' give the nigger (when he 's caught),  
 to pay him fer his trickin'  
 In gittin' the wrong man took up, a  
 most H fired lickin', —  
 It 's jest the way with all on 'em, the  
 inconsistent critters,  
 They 're 'most enough to make a man  
 blasphemè his mornin' bitters;  
 I'll be your frien' thru thick an' thin  
 an' in all kines o' weathers,  
 An' all you 'll hev to pay fer 's jest the  
 waste o' tar an' feathers:  
 A lady owned the bed, ye see, a widder,  
 tu, Miss Shennon;  
 It wuz her mite; we would ha' took  
 another, ef ther' d ben one:  
 We don't make *no* charge for the ride  
 an' all the other fixins.  
 Le' 's liquor; Gin'ral, you can chalk our  
 friend for all the mixins."  
 A meetin' then wuz called, where they  
 "RESOLVED, Thet we respec'  
 B. S. Esquire for quallerties o' heart an'  
 intellec'  
 Peculiar to Columby's sile, an' not to no  
 one else's,  
 Thet makes Européan tyrans scringe in  
 all their gilded pel'ces,  
 An' doos gret honor to our race an'  
 Southun institootions":  
 (I give ye jest the substance o' the lead-  
 in' resoolootions:)  
 "RESOLVED, Thet we revere in him a  
 soger 'thout a flor,  
 A martyr to the princerples o' libbatty  
 an' lor:  
 RESOLVED, Thet other nations all, ef sot  
 'longside o' us,  
 For vartoo, larnin', chivverlry, ain't no-  
 ways with a cuss."



They gut up a subscription, tu, but no  
 gret come o' *thet* ;  
 I 'xpect in cairin' of it roun' they took a  
 leaky hat ;  
 Though Southun genelmun ain't slow at  
 puttin' down their name,  
 (When they can write,) fer in the eend  
 it comes to jes' the same,  
 Because, ye see, 't 's the fashion here to  
 sign an' not to think  
 A critter 'd be so sordid ez to ax 'em for  
 the chink :  
 I did n't call but jest on one, an' *he*  
 drewed toothpick on me,  
 An' reckoned he warn't goin' to stan' no  
 sech doggauned econ'my ;  
 So nothin' more wuz realized, 'ceptin'  
 the good-will shown,  
 Than ef 't had ben from fust to last a  
 reg'lar Cotton Loan.  
 It 's a good way, though, come to think,  
 coz ye enjy the sense  
 O' lendin' lib'rally to the Lord, an' nary  
 red o' 'xpense :  
 Sence then I 've gut my name up for a  
 gin'rous-hearted man  
 By jes' subscribin' right an' left on this  
 high-minded plan ;  
 I 've gin away my thousands so to every  
 Southun sort  
 O' missions, colleges, an' sech, ner ain't  
 no poorer for 't.  
 I warn't so bad off, arter all ; I need n't  
 hardly mention  
 That Guv'ment owed me quite a pile for  
 my arrears o' pension, —  
 I mean the poor, weak thing we *hed* : we  
 run a new one now,  
 That strings a feller with a claim up ta  
 the nighes' bough,  
 An' *prectises* the rights o' man, purtects  
 down-trodden debtors,  
 Ner woun't hev creditors about a-  
 scrougin' o' their betters :  
 Jeff's gut the last ideas ther' is, pos-  
 crip', fourteenth edition,  
 He knows it takes some enterprise to  
 run an oppersition ;  
 Ourn's the fust thru-by-daylight train,  
 with all ou'doors for deepot ;  
 Yourn goes so slow you 'd think 't wuz  
 drawn by a las' cent'ry teapot ; —  
 Wal, I gut all on 't paid in gold afore  
 our State seceded,  
 An' done wal, for Confed'rit bonds  
 warn't jest the cheese I needed :

Nutbut wut they 're ez *good* ez gold, but  
 then it 's hard a-breakin' on 'em,  
 An' ignorant folks is ollers sot an' wun't  
 git used to takin' on 'em ;  
 They 're wuth ez much ez wut they wuz  
 afore ole Mem'nger signed 'em,  
 An' go off middlin' wal for drinks,  
 when ther's 's a knife behind 'em ;  
 We *du* miss silver, jes' fer thet an' ridin'  
 in a bus,  
 Now we 've shook off the desputs thet  
 wuz suckin' at our pus ;  
 An' it 's *because* the South 's so rich ; 't  
 wuz nat'ral to expect  
 Supplies o' change wuz jes' the things we  
 should n't recollect ;  
 We 'd ough' to ha' thought aforehan',  
 though, o' thet good rule o' Crock-  
 ett's,  
 For 't 's tiresome cairin' cotton-bales an'  
 niggers in your pockets,  
 Ner 't ain't quite hendy to pass off one  
 o' your six-foot Guineas  
 An' git your halves an' quarters back in  
 gals an' pickaninnies :  
 Wal, 't ain't quite all a feller 'd ax, but  
 then ther' 's this to say,  
 It 's on'y jest among ourselves thet we  
 expect to pay ;  
 Our system would ha' caird us thru in  
 any Bible cent'ry,  
 'fore this onscripterl plan come up o'  
 books by double entry ;  
 We go the patriarkle here out o' all  
 sight an' hearin',  
 For Jacob warn't a suckemstance to  
 Jeff at financierin' ;  
*He* never'd thought o' borryin' from  
 Esau like all nater  
 An' then cornfiscatin' all debts to sech  
 a small pertater ;  
 There 's plitlickle econ'my, now, com-  
 bined 'ith morril beauty  
 Thet saycrifices privit ends (your in-  
 my's, tu) to dooty !  
 Wy, Jeff 'd ha' gin him five an' won his  
 eye-teeth 'foré he knowed it,  
 An', stid o' wastin' pottage, he 'd ha' eat  
 it up an' owed it.  
 But I wuz goin' on to say how I come  
 here to dwell ; —  
 'Nough said, thet, arter lookin' roun',  
 I liked the place so wal,  
 Where niggers doos a double good, with  
 us atop to stiddy 'em,  
 By bein' proofs o' prophecy an' suckle-  
 atin' medium,

Where a man 's sunthin' coz he 's white,  
 an' whiskey 's cheap ez fleas,  
 An' the financial pollercy jes' sooted my  
 idees,  
 Thet I friz down right where I wuz,  
 merried the Widder Shennon,  
 (Her thirds wuz part in cotton-land,  
 part in the curse o' Canaan,)  
 An' here I be ez lively ez a chipmunk  
 on a wall,  
 'With nothin' to feel riled about much  
 later 'n Eddam's fall.

Ez fur ez human foresight goes, we  
 made an even trade:  
 She gut an overseer, an' I a fem'ly  
 ready-made,  
 The youngest on 'em 's 'mos' growed up,  
 rugged an' spry ez weazles,  
 So 's 't ther' 's no resk o' doctors' bills  
 fer hoopin'-cough an' measles.  
 Our farm 's at Turkey-Buzzard Roost,  
 Little Big Boosy River,  
 Wal located in all respex, — fer 't ain't  
 the chills 'n' fever  
 Thet makes my writin' seem to squirm ;  
 a Southuner 'd allow I 'd  
 Some call to shake, for I 've jest hed to  
 meller a new cowhide.  
 Miss S. is all 'f a lady ; th' ain't no bet-  
 ter on Big Boosy  
 Ner one with more accomplishmunts  
 'twixt here an' Tuscaloosy ;  
 She 's an F. F., the tallest kind, an'  
 prouder 'n the Gran' Turk,  
 An' never hed a relative thet done a  
 stroke o' work ;  
 Hern ain't a scrimpin' fem'ly sech ez  
*you* git up Down East,  
 Th' ain't a growed member on 't but  
 owes his thousuns et the least :  
 She *is* some old ; but then agin ther' 's  
 drawbacks in my sheer :  
 Wut 's left o' me ain't more 'n enough  
 to make a Brigadier :  
 Wust is, thet she hez tantrums ; she 's  
 like Seth Moody's gun  
 (Him thet wuz nicknamed from his limp  
 Ole Dot an' Kerry One) ;  
 He 'd left her loaded up a spell, an' hed  
 to git her clear,  
 So he onhitched, — Jærusalem ! the  
 middle o' last year  
 Wuz right nex' door compared to where  
 she kicked the critter tu  
 (Though *jest* where he brought up wuz  
 wut no human never knew) ;

His brother Asaph picked her up an'  
 tied her to a tree,  
 An' then she kicked an hour 'n' a half  
 afore she 'd let it be :  
 Wal, Miss S. *doos* hev cuttins-up an'  
 pourins-out o' vials,  
 But then she hez her widder's thirds, an'  
 all on us hez trials.  
 My objec', though, in writin' now  
 warn't to allude to sech,  
 But to another suckemstance *more*  
 dellykit to tech, —  
 I want thet you should grad'lly break  
 my merriage to Jerushy,  
 An' there 's a heap of argymunts thet 's  
 emple to indooce ye :  
 Fust place, State's Prison, — wal, it 's  
 true it warn't fer crime, o' course,  
 But then it 's jest the same fer her in  
 gittin' a divorce ;  
 Nex' place, my State 's secedin' out hez  
 leg'lly lef' me free  
 To merry any one I please, pervidin'  
 it 's a she ;  
 Fin'lly, I never wun't come back, she  
 need n't hev no fear on 't,  
 But then it 's wal to fix things right fer  
 fear Miss S. should hear on 't ;  
 Lastly, I 've gut religion South, an'  
 Rushy she 's a pagan  
 Thet sets by th' graven imiges o' the  
 gret Nothun Dagon ;  
 (Now I hain't seen one in six munts,  
 for, sence our Treashry Loan,  
 Though yaller boys is thick enough,  
 eagles hez kind o' flown ;)   
 An' ef J wants a stronger pint than  
 them thet I hev stated,  
 Wy, she 's an aliun in'my now, an'  
 I 've been cornfiscated, —  
 For sence we 've entered on th' estate o'  
 the late nayshnul eagle,  
 She hain't no kin' o' right but jes' wut  
 I allow ez legle :  
 Wut *doos* Secedin' mean, ef 't ain't thet  
 nat'ul rights hez riz, 'n'  
 Thet wut is mine 's my own, but wut 's  
 another man 's ain't his'n ?  
 Besides, I could n't do no else ; Miss S.  
 suz she to me,  
 "You 've sheered my bed," [thet 's  
 when I paid my interduction fee  
 To Southun rites,] "an' kep' your  
 sheer," [wal, I allow it sticked  
 So 's 't I wuz most six weeks in jail  
 afore I gut me picked,]

“Ner never paid no demmiges; but  
 that wun’t do no harm,  
 Pervidin’ that you ’ll undertake to over-  
 see the farm;  
 [My eldes’ boy he ’s so took up, wut  
 with the Ringtail Rangers  
 An’ settin’ in the Justice-Court for wel-  
 comin’ o’ strangers”];  
 [He sot on *me* ;] “an’ so, ef you ’ll jest  
 undertake the care  
 Upon a mod’rit sellery, we’ll up an’  
 call it square;  
 But ef you *can’t* conclude,” suz she, an’  
 give a kin’ o’ grin,  
 “Wy, the Gran’ Jurymen, I ’xpect, ’ll  
 hev to set agin.”  
 That’s the way metters stood at fust;  
 now wut wuz I to du,  
 But jes’ to make the best on ’t an’ off  
 coat an’ buckle tu?  
 Ther’ ain’t a livin’ man that finds an  
 income necessarier  
 Than me,—bimeby I ’ll tell ye how I  
 fin’lly come to merry her.

She hed another motive, tu: I mention  
 of it here  
 T’ encourage lads that ’s growin’ up to  
 study ’n’ persevere,  
 An’ show ’em how much better ’t pays  
 to mind their winter-schoolin’  
 Than to go off on benders ’n’ sech, an’  
 waste their time in foolin’;  
 Ef ’t warn’t for studyin’ evenins, why, I  
 never ’d ha’ ben here  
 An’ orn’ment o’ socity, in my appropriat  
 spear:  
 She wanted somebody, ye see, o’ taste  
 an’ cultivation,  
 To talk along o’ preachers when they  
 stopt to the plantation;  
 For folks in Dixie th’t read an’ rite,  
 onless it is by jarks,  
 Is skurce ez wut they wuz among th’  
 origenle patriarchs;  
 To fit a feller f’ wut they call the soshle  
 higherarchy,  
 All thet you ’ve gut to know is jes’ be-  
 yund an evrage darky;  
 Schoolin’ ’s wut they can’t seem to stan’,  
 they’re tu consarned high-pressure,  
 An’ knowin’ t’ much might spile a boy  
 for bein’ a Secesher.  
 We hain’t no settled preachin’ here, ner  
 ministeril taxes;  
 The min’ster’s only settlement’s the  
 carpet-bag he packs his

Razor an’ soap-brush intu, with his  
 hymbook an’ his Bible,—  
 But they *du* preach, I swan to man, it’s  
 pufkly indescrib’le!  
 They go it like an Ericsson’s ten-hoss-  
 power coleric engine,  
 An’ make Ole Split-Foot winch an’  
 squirm, for all he’s used to singein’;  
 Hawkins’s whetstone ain’t a pinch o’  
 primin’ to the innards  
 To hearin’ on ’em put free grace t’ a lot  
 o’ tough old sinhards!  
 But I must eend this letter now: ’fore  
 long I ’ll send a fresh un;  
 I’ve lots o’ things to write about, per-  
 ticklerly Seceshun:  
 I’m called off now to mission-work, to  
 let a leetle law in  
 To Cynthy’s hide: an’ so, till death,  
 Yourn,

BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN.

NO. II.

MASON AND SLIDELL: A YANKEE  
 IDYLL.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE ATLANTIC  
 MONTHLY.

JAALAM, 6th Jan., 1862.

GENTLEMEN,—I was highly gratified by  
 the insertion of a portion of my letter in  
 the last number of your valuable and en-  
 tertaining Miscellany, though in a type  
 which rendered its substance inaccessible  
 even to the beautiful new spectacles pre-  
 sented to me by a Committee of the Parish  
 on New Year’s Day. I trust that I was  
 able to bear your very considerable abridg-  
 ment of my lucubrations with a spirit be-  
 coming a Christian. My third granddaugh-  
 ter, Rebekah, aged fourteen years, and whom  
 I have trained to read slowly and with  
 proper emphasis (a practice too much ne-  
 glected in our modern systems of educa-  
 tion), read aloud to me the excellent essay  
 upon “Old Age,” the authour of which I  
 cannot help suspecting to be a young man  
 who has never yet known what it was to  
 have snow (*canities morosa*) upon his own  
 roof. *Dissolve frigus, large super foco lig-  
 na reponens*, is a rule for the young, whose  
 wood-pile is yet abundant for such cheerful  
 lenitives. A good life behind him is the  
 best thing to keep an old man’s shoulders  
 from shivering at every breath of sorrow or  
 ill-fortune. But methinks it were easier



for an old man to feel the disadvantages of youth than the advantages of age. Of these latter I reckon one of the chiefest to be this: that we attach a less inordinate value to our own productions, and, distrusting daily more and more our own wisdom (with the conceit whereof at twenty we wrap ourselves away from knowledge as with a garment), do reconcile ourselves with the wisdom of God. I could have wished, indeed, that room might have been made for the residue of the anecdote relating to Deacon Tinkham, which would not only have gratified a natural curiosity on the part of the publick (as I have reason to know from several letters of inquiry already received), but would also, as I think, have largely increased the circulation of your Magazine in this town. *Nihil humani alienum*, there is a curiosity about the affairs of our neighbors which is not only pardonable, but even commendable. But I shall abide a more fitting season.

As touching the following literary effort of Esquire Biglow, much might be profitably said on the topick of Idyllick and Pastoral Poetry, and concerning the proper distinctions to be made between them, from Theocritus, the inventor of the former, to Collins, the latest authour I know of who has emulated the classicks in the latter style. But in the time of a Civil War worthy a Milton to defend and a Lucan to sing, it may be reasonably doubted whether the publick, never too studious of serious instruction, might not consider other objects more deserving of present attention. Concerning the title of Idyll, which Mr. Biglow has adopted at my suggestion, it may not be improper to animadvert, that the name properly signifies a poem somewhat rustick in phrase (for, though the learned are not agreed as to the particular dialect employed by Theocritus, they are univrsanimous both as to its rusticity and its capacity of rising now and then to the level of more elevated sentiments and expressions), while it is also descriptive of real scenery and manners. Yet it must be admitted that the production now in question (which here and there bears perhaps too plainly the marks of my correcting hand) does partake of the nature of a Pastoral, inasmuch as the interlocutors therein are purely imaginary beings, and the whole is little better than *καπνού σκιάς όνάρ*. The plot was, as I believe, suggested by the "Twa Briggs" of Robert Burns, a Scottish poet of the last century, as that found its prototype in the "Mutual Complaint of Plainstanes and Causey" by Fergusson, though the metre of this latter be different by a foot in each verse. Perhaps the Two Dogs of Cervantes

gave the first hint. I reminded my talented young parishioner and friend that Concord Bridge had long since yielded to the edacious tooth of Time. But he answered me to this effect: that there was no greater mistake of an authour than to suppose the reader had no fancy of his own; that, if once that faculty was to be called into activity, it were better to be in for the whole sheep than the shoulder; and that he knew Concord like a book, — an expression questionable in propriety, since there are few things with which he is not more familiar than with the printed page. In proof of what he affirmed, he showed me some verses which with others he had stricken out as too much delaying the action, but which I communicate in this place because they rightly define "punkin-seed" (which Mr. Bartlett would have a kind of perch, — a creature to which I have found a rod or pole not to be so easily equivalent in our inland waters as in the books of arithmetic), and because it conveys an eulogium on the worthy son of an excellent father, with whose acquaintance (*ehew, fugaces anni!*) I was formerly honoured.

"But nowadays the Bridge ain't wut they show,  
So much ez Em'son, Hawthorne, an' Thoreau.  
I know the village, though; was sent there  
once  
A-schoolin', 'cause to home I played the  
dunce;  
An' I've ben sence a-visitin' the Jedge,  
Whose garding whispers with the river's edge,  
Where I've sot mornin's lazy as the bream,  
Whose on'y business is to head up-stream,  
(We call 'em punkin-seed,) or else in chat  
Along 'th the Jedge, who covers with his hat  
More wit an' gumption an' shrewd Yankee  
sense  
Than there is mosses on an ole stone fence."

Concerning the subject-matter of the verses, I have not the leisure at present to write so fully as I could wish, my time being occupied with the preparation of a discourse for the forthcoming bi-centenary celebration of the first settlement of Jaalam East Parish. It may gratify the publick interest to mention the circumstance, that my investigations to this end have enabled me to verify the fact (of much historick importance, and hitherto hotly debated) that Shearjashub Tarbox was the first child of white parentage born in this town, being named in his father's will under date August 7th, or 9th, 1662. It is well known that those who advocate the claims of Mehetable Goings are unable to find any trace of her existence prior to October of that year. As respects the settlement of the Mason and Slidell question, Mr. Biglow has not incorrectly stated the

popular sentiment, so far as I can judge by its expression in this locality. For myself, I feel more sorrow than resentment: for I am old enough to have heard those talk of England who still, even after the unhappy estrangement, could not unschool their lips from calling her the Mother-Country. But England has insisted on ripping up old wounds, and has undone the healing work of fifty years; for nations do not reason, they only feel, and the *spretæ injuria formæ* rankles in their minds as bitterly as in that of a woman. And because this is so, I feel the more satisfaction that our Government has acted (as all Governments should, standing as they do between the people and their passions) as if it had arrived at years of discretion. There are three short and simple words, the hardest of all to pronounce in any language (and I suspect they were no easier before the confusion of tongues), but which no man or nation that cannot utter can claim to have arrived at manhood. Those words are, *I was wrong*; and I am proud that, while England played the boy, our rulers had strength enough from the People below and wisdom enough from God above to quit themselves like men.

The sore points on both sides have been skilfully exasperated by interested and unscrupulous persons, who saw in a war between the two countries the only hope of profitable return for their investment in Confederate stock, whether political or financial. The always supercilious, often insulting, and sometimes even brutal tone of British journals and public men has certainly not tended to soothe whatever resentment might exist in America.

"Perhaps it was right to dissemble your love,  
But why did you kick me down stairs?"

We have no reason to complain that England, as a necessary consequence of her clubs, has become a great society for the minding of other people's business, and we can smile good-naturedly when she lectures other nations on the sins of arrogance and conceit; but we may justly consider it a breach of the political *convenances* which are expected to regulate the intercourse of one well-bred government with another, when men holding places in the ministry allow themselves to dictate our domestic policy, to instruct us in our duty, and to stigmatize as unholy a war for the rescue of whatever a high-minded people should hold most vital and most sacred. Was it in good taste, that I may use the mildest term, for Earl Russell to expound our own Constitution to President Lincoln,

or to make a new and fallacious application of an old phrase for our benefit, and tell us that the Rebels were fighting for independence and we for empire? As if all wars for independence were by nature just and deserving of sympathy, and all wars for empire ignoble and worthy only of reprobation, or as if these easy phrases in any way characterized this terrible struggle, — terrible not so truly in any superficial sense, as from the essential and deadly enmity of the principles that underlie it. His Lordship's bit of borrowed rhetoric would justify Smith O'Brien, Nana Sahib, and the Maori chieftains, while it would condemn nearly every war in which England has ever been engaged. Was it so very presumptuous in us to think that it would be decorous in English statesmen if they spared time enough to acquire some kind of knowledge, though of the most elementary kind, in regard to this country and the questions at issue here, before they pronounced so off-hand a judgment? Or is political information expected to come Dogberry-fashion in England, like reading and writing, by nature?

And now all respectable England is wondering at our irritability, and sees a quite satisfactory explanation of it in our national vanity. *Suave mari magno*, it is pleasant, sitting in the easy-chairs of Downing Street, to sprinkle pepper on the raw wounds of a kindred people struggling for life, and philosophical to find in self-conceit the cause of our instinctive resentment. Surely we were of all nations the least liable to any temptation of vanity at a time when the gravest anxiety and the keenest sorrow were never absent from our hearts. Nor is conceit the exclusive attribute of any one nation. The earliest of English travellers, Sir John Mandeville, took a less provincial view of the matter when he said, "For fro what partie of the erthe that men duellen, other aboven or beneath, it semethe always to hem that duellen that thei gon more righte than any other folke." The English have always had their fair share of this amiable quality. We may say of them still, as the authour of the *Lettres Cabalistiques* said of them more than a century ago, "*Ces derniers disent naturellement qu'il n'y a qu'eux qui soient estimables.*" And, as he also says, "*J'aimerois presque autant tomber entre les mains d'un Inquisiteur que d'un Anglois qui me fait sentir sans cesse combien il s'estime plus que moi, et qui ne daigne me parler que pour injurier ma Nation et pour m'ennuyer du récit des grandes qualités de la sienne.*" Of this Bull we may safely say with Horace, *habet fanum in*



*cornu*. What we felt to be especially insulting was the quiet assumption that the descendants of men who left the Old World for the sake of principle, and who had made the wilderness into a New World patterned after an idea, could not possibly be susceptible of a generous or lofty sentiment, could have no feeling of nationality deeper than that of a tradesman for his shop. One would have thought, in listening to England, that we were presumptuous in fancying that we were a nation at all, or had any other principle of union than that of booths at a fair, where there is no higher notion of government than the constable, or better image of God than that stamped upon the current coin.

It is time for Englishmen to consider whether there was nothing in the spirit of their press and of their leading public men calculated to rouse a just indignation, and to cause a permanent estrangement on the part of any nation capable of self-respect, and sensitively jealous, as ours then was, of foreign interference. Was there nothing in the indecent haste with which belligerent rights were conceded to the Rebels, nothing in the abrupt tone assumed in the Trent case, nothing in the fitting out of Confederate privateers, that might stir the blood of a people already overcharged with doubt, suspicion, and terrible responsibility? The laity in any country do not stop to consider points of law, but they have an instinctive perception of the *animus* that actuates the policy of a foreign nation; and in our own case they remembered that the British authorities in Canada did not wait till diplomacy could send home to England for her slow official tinder-box to fire the "Caroline." Add to this, what every sensible American knew, that the moral support of England was equal to an army of two hundred thousand men to the Rebels, while it insured us another year or two of exhausting war. It was not so much the spite of her words (though the time might have been more tastefully chosen) as the actual power for evil in them that we felt as a deadly wrong. Perhaps the most immediate and efficient cause of mere irritation was the sudden and unaccountable change of manner on the other side of the water. Only six months before, the Prince of Wales had come over to call us cousins; and everywhere it was nothing but "our American brethren," that great offshoot of British institutions in the New World, so almost identical with them in laws, language, and literature, — this last of the alliterative compliments being so bitterly true, that perhaps it will not be retracted even now. To this

outburst of long-repressed affection we responded with genuine warmth, if with something of the awkwardness of a poor relation bewildered with the sudden tightening of the ties of consanguinity when it is rumored that he has come into a large estate. Then came the Rebellion, and, *presto!* a flaw in our titles was discovered, the plate we were promised at the family table is flung at our head, and we were again the scum of creation, intolerably vulgar, at once cowardly and overbearing, — no relations of theirs, after all, but a dreggy hybrid of the basest bloods of Europe. Panurge was not quicker to call Friar John his former friend. I cannot help thinking of Walter Mapes's jingling paraphrase of Petronius, —

"Dummodo sim splendidis vestibis ornatus,  
Et multa familia sim circumvallatus,  
Prudens sum et sapiens et morigeratus,  
Et tuus nepos sum et tu meus cognatus," —

which I may freely render thus: —

So long as I was prosperous, I'd dinners by  
the dozen,  
Was well-bred, witty, virtuous, and everybody's  
cousin;  
If luck should turn, as well she may, her fancy  
is so flexible,  
Will virtue, cousinship, and all return with  
her from exile?

There was nothing in all this to exasperate a philosopher much to make him smile rather; but the earth's surface is not chiefly inhabited by philosophers, and I revive the recollection of it now in perfect good-humour, merely by way of suggesting to our *ci-devant* British cousins, that it would have been easier for them to hold their tongues than for us to keep our tempers under the circumstances.

The English Cabinet made a blunder, unquestionably, in taking it so hastily for granted that the United States had fallen forever from their position as a first-rate power, and it was natural that they should vent a little of their vexation on the people whose inexplicable obstinacy in maintaining freedom and order, and in resisting degradation, was likely to convict them of their mistake. But if bearing a grudge be the sure mark of a small mind in the individual, can it be a proof of high spirit in a nation? If the result of the present estrangement between the two countries shall be to make us more independent of British twaddle (*Indomito nec dira ferens stipendia Tauro*), so much the better; but if it is to make us insensible to the value of British opinion in matters where it gives us the judgment of an impartial and culti-



vated outsider, if we are to shut ourselves out from the advantages of English culture, the loss will be ours, and not theirs. Because the door of the old homestead has been once slammed in our faces, shall we in a huff reject all future advances of conciliation, and cut ourselves foolishly off from any share in the humanizing influences of the place, with its ineffable riches of association, its heirlooms of immemorial culture, its historic monuments, ours no less than theirs, its noble gallery of ancestral portraits? We have only to succeed, and England will not only respect, but, for the first time, begin to understand us. And let us not, in our justifiable indignation at wanton insult, forget that England is not the England only of snobs who dread the democracy they do not comprehend, but the England of history, of heroes, statesmen, and poets, whose names are dear, and their influence as salutary to us as to her.

Let us strengthen the hands of those in authority over us, and curb our own tongues, remembering that General Wait commonly proves in the end more than a match for General Headlong, and that the Good Book ascribes safety to a multitude, indeed, but not to a mob, of counsellours. Let us remember and perpend the words of Paulus Emilius to the people of Rome; that, "if they judged they could manage the war to more advantage by any other, he would willingly yield up his charge; but if they confided in him, *they were not to make themselves his colleagues in his office, or raise reports, or criticise his actions, but, without talking, supply him with means and assistance necessary to the carrying on of the war; for, if they proposed to command their own commander, they would render this expedition more ridiculous than the former.*" (*Vide Plutarchum in Vitâ P. E.*) Let us also not forget what the same excellent authour says concerning Perseus's fear of spending money, and not permit the covetousness of Brother Jonathan to be the good fortune of Jefferson Davis. For my own part, till I am ready to admit the Commander-in-Chief to my pulpit, I shall abstain from planning his battles. If courage be the sword, yet is patience the armour of a nation; and in our desire for peace, let us never be willing to surrender the Constitution bequeathed us by fathers at least as wise as ourselves (even with Jefferson Davis to help us), and, with those degenerate Romans, *tuta et presentia quam vetera et periculosa malle.*

And not only should we bridle our own tongues, but the pens of others, which are

swift to convey useful intelligence to the enemy. This is no new inconvenience; for, under date, 3d June, 1745, General Pepperell wrote thus to Governor Shirley from Louisbourg: "What your Excellency observes of the *army's being made acquainted with any plans proposed, until ready to be put in execution*, has always been disagreeable to me, and I have given many cautions relating to it. But when your Excellency considers that *our Council of War consists of more than twenty members*, I am persuaded you will think it *impossible for me to hinder it*, if any of them will persist in communicating to inferior officers and soldiers what ought to be kept secret. I am informed that the Boston newspapers are filled with paragraphs from private letters relating to the expedition. Will your Excellency permit me to say I think it may be of ill consequence? Would it not be convenient, if your Excellency should forbid the Printers' inserting such news?" Verily, if *tempora mutantur, we may question the et nos mutamur in illis*; and if tongues be leaky, it will need all hands at the pumps to save the Ship of State. Our history dotes and repeats itself. If Sassyus (rather than Alcibiades) find a parallel in Beauregard, so Weakwash, as he is called by the brave Lieutenant Lion Gardiner, need not seek far among our own Sachems for his antitype.

With respect,

Your ob<sup>d</sup> humble serv<sup>t</sup>,  
HOMER WILBUR, A. M.

I LOVE to start out arter night's begun,  
An' all the chores about the farm are done,  
The critters milked an' foddered, gates  
shet fast,  
Tools cleaned aginst to-morrer, supper  
past,  
An' Nancy darnin' by her ker'sene  
lamp,—  
I love, I say, to start upon a tramp,  
To shake the kinkles out o' back an'  
legs,  
An' kind o' rack my life off from the  
dregs  
Thet's apt to settle in the buttry-hutch  
Of folks thet foller in one rut too much.  
Hard work is good an' wholesome, past  
all doubt;  
But 't air't so, ef the mind gits tuck-  
ered out.

Now, bein' born in Middlesex, you know,

There 's certin spots where I like best to go :

The Concord road, for instance, (I, for one,

Most gin'lly ollers call it *John Bull's Run*.)

The field o' Lexin'ton where England tried

The fastest colours that she ever dyed, An' Concord Bridge, thet Davis, when he came,

Found was the bee-line track to heaven an' fame,

Ez all roads be by natur', ef your soul Don't sneak thru shun-pikes so 's to save the toll.

They 're 'most too fur away, take too much time

To visit of en, ef it ain't in rhyme ; But the ' 's a walk thet 's hendier, a sight,

An' suits me fust-rate of a winter's night, —

I mean the round whale's-back o' Prospect Hill.

I love to l'iter there while night grows still,

An' in the twinklin' villages about, Fust here, then there, the well-saved lights goes out,

An' nary sound but watch-dogs' false alarms,

Or muffled cock-crows from the drowsy farms,

Where some wise rooster (men act jest thet way)

Stands to 't thet moon-rise is the break o' day :

(So Mister Seward sticks a three-months' pin

Where the war 'd oughto eend, then tries agin ;

My gran'ther's rule was safer 'n 't is to crow :

*Don't never prophesy — unless ye know.*)

I love to muse there till it kind o' seems Ez ef of the world went eddyin' off in dreams ;

The northwest wind thet twitches at my baird

Blows out o' sturdier days not easy scared,

An' the same moon thet this December shines

Starts out the tents an' booths o' Putnam's lines ;

The rail-fence posts, acrost the hill thet runs,

Turn ghosts o' sogers should'rin' ghosts o' guns ;

Ez wheels the sentry, glints a flash o' light,

Along the firelock won at Concord Fight,

An', 'twixt the silences, now fur, now nigh,

Rings the sharp challenge, hums the low reply.

Ez I was settin' so, it warn't long sence, Mixin' the puffict with the present tense,

I heerd two voices som'ers in the air, Though, ef I was to die, I can't tell where :

Voices I call 'em : 't was a kind o' sough

Like pine-trees thet the wind 's ageth-'rin' through ;

An', fact, I thought it *was* the wind a spell,

Then some misdoubted, could n't fairly tell,

Fust sure, then not, jest as you hold an eel,

I knowed, an' did n't, — fin'lly seemed to feel

'T was Concord Bridge a talkin' off to kill

With the Stone Spike thet 's druv thru Bunker's Hill ;

Whether 't was so, or ef I on'y dreamed, I could n't say ; I tell it ez it seemed.

#### THE BRIDGE.

Wal, neighbor, tell us wut 's turned up thet 's new ?

You 're younger 'n I be, — nigher Boston, tu :

An' down to Boston, ef you take their showin',

Wut they don't know ain't hardly wuth the knowin'.

There 's *sunthin'* goin' on, I know : las' night

The British sogers killed in our gret fight

(Nigh fifty year they hed n't stirred nor spoke)

Made sech a coil you 'd thought a dam hed broke :

Why, one he up an' beat a revellee  
 With his own crossbones on a holler  
 tree,  
 Till all the graveyards swarmed out like  
 a hive  
 With faces I hain't seen sence Seventy-  
 five.  
 Wut *is* the news? 'Tain't good, or  
 they 'd be cheerin'.  
 Speak slow an' clear, for I 'm some hard  
 o' hearin'.

## THE MONIMENT.

I don't know hardly ef it's good or  
 bad, —

## THE BRIDGE.

At wust, it can't be wus than wut we've  
 had.

## THE MONIMENT.

You know them envys thet the Rebbles  
 sent,  
 An' Cap'n Wilkes he borried o' the  
 Trent?

## THE BRIDGE.

Wut! they ha'n't hanged 'em? Then  
 their wits is gone!  
 Thet 's the sure way to make a goose a  
 swan!

## THE MONIMENT.

No: England she *would* hev 'em, *Fee,*  
*Faw, Fum!*  
 (Ef though she hed n't fools enough to  
 home,)  
 So they 've returned 'em —

## THE BRIDGE.

*Hev* they? Wal, by heaven,  
 Thet 's the wust news I 've heerd sence  
 Seventy-seven!  
*By George,* I meant to say, though I  
 declare  
 It 's 'most enough to make a deacon  
 swear.

## THE MONIMENT.

Now don't go off half-cock: folks never  
 gains  
 By usin' pepper-sarse instid o' brains.  
 Come, neighbor, you don't understan' —

## THE BRIDGE.

How? Hey?  
 Not understan' ? Why, wut 's t<sup>e</sup> hen-  
 der, pray?

Must I go huntin' round to find a chap  
 To tell me when my face hez hed a slap?

## THE MONIMENT.

See here: the British they found out a  
 flaw  
 In Cap'n Wilkes's readin' o' the law:  
 (They *make* all laws, you know, an' so,  
 o' course,  
 It's nateral they should understan' their  
 force:)  
 He'd oughto ha'took the vessel into port,  
 An' hed her sot on by a reg'lar court;  
 She was a mail-ship, an' a steamer, tu,  
 An' thet, they say, hez changed the  
 pint o' view,  
 Coz the old practice, bein' meant for  
 sails,  
 Ef tried upon a steamer, kind o' fails;  
 You *may* take out despatches, but you  
 mus' n't  
 Take nary man —

## THE BRIDGE.

You mean to say, you dus' n't!  
 Changed pint o' view! No, no, — it's  
 overboard  
 With law an' gospel, when their ox is  
 gored!  
 I tell ye, England's law, on sea an' land,  
 Hez ollers ben, "*I've gut the heaviest  
 hand.*"  
 Take nary man? Fine preachin' from  
*her* lips!  
 Why, she hez taken hunderds from our  
 ships,  
 An' would agin, an' swear she had a  
 right to,  
 Ef we warn't strong enough to be perlite  
 to.  
 Of all the sarse thet I can call to mind,  
 England *doos* make the most onpleasant  
 kind:  
 It's you 're the sinner ollers, she 's the  
 saint;  
 Wut 's good 's all English, all thet is n't  
 ain't;  
 Wut profits her is ollers right an' just,  
 An' ef you don't read Scriptur so, you  
 must;  
 She's praised herself ontill she fairly  
 thinks  
 There ain't no light in Natur when she  
 winks;  
 Hain't she the Ten Comman'ments in  
 her pus?



Could the world stir 'thout she went, tu,  
ez nus?

She ain't like other mortals, thet's a  
fact:

*She* never stopped the habus-corpus act,  
Nor specie payments, nor she never yet  
Cut down the int'rest on her public  
debt;

*She* don't put down rebellions, lets 'em  
breed,

An' 's ollers willin' Ireland should se-  
cede;

She 's all thet 's honest, honnable, an'  
fair,

An' when the vartooos died they made  
her heir.

## THE MONIMENT.

Wal, wal, two wrongs don't never make  
a right;

Ef we 're mistaken, own up, an' don't  
fight:

For gracious' sake, ha'n't we enough to  
du

'thout gettin' up a fight with England,  
tu?

She thinks we 're rabble-rid—

## THE BRIDGE.

An' so we can't  
Distinguish 'twixt *You ought n't* an'  
*You sha' n't!*

She judges by herself; she 's no idear  
How 't stiddies folks to give 'em their  
fair sheer:

The odds 'twixt her an' us is plain 's a  
steeples,—

Her People 's turned to Mob, our Mob 's  
turned People.

## THE MONIMENT.

She 's riled jes' now—

## THE BRIDGE.

Plain proof her cause ain't strong,—  
The one thet fust gits mad 's 'most ollers  
wrong.

Why, sence she helped in lickin' Nap the  
Fust,

An' pricked a bubble jest agoin' to  
bust,

With Rooshy, Prooshy, Austrys, all as-  
sistin',

Th' ain't nut a face but wut she 's shook  
her fist in,

Ez though she done it all, an' ten times  
more,

An' nothin' never hed gut done afore,  
Nor never could agin', 'thout she wuz  
spliced

On to one eend an' gin th' old airth a  
hoist.

She *is* some punkins, thet I wun't deny,  
(For ain't she some related to you 'n'  
I?)

But there 's a few small intrists here  
below

Outside the counter o' John Bull an'  
Co,

An', though they can't conceit how 't  
should be so,

I guess the Lord druv down Creation's  
spiles

'thout no *gret* helpin' from the British  
Isles,

An' could contrive to keep things pooty  
stiff

Ef they withdrewed from business in r  
miff;

I ha' n't no patience with sech swellin'  
fellers ez

Think God can't forge 'thout them *tr*  
blow the bellerses.

## THE MONIMENT.

You 're ollers quick to set your *back*  
aridge,

Though 't suits a tom-cat more 'n a  
sober bridge:

Don't you git het: they thought the  
thing was planned;

They 'll cool off when they come to  
understand.

## THE BRIDGE.

Ef *thet* 's wut you expect, you 'll *hev*  
to wait:

Folks never understand the folks they  
hate:

She 'll fin' some other grievance jest ez  
good,

'fore the month 's out, to git misunder-  
stood.

England cool off! She 'll do it, ef she  
sees

She 's run her head into a swarm o'  
bees.

I ain't so prejudiced ez wut you sponse.  
I hev thought England was the best

thet goes;

Remember (no, you can't), when *I* was  
reared,  
*God save the King* was all the tune you  
heard :  
But it's enough to turn Wachuset roun'  
This stumpin' fellers when you think  
they're down.

## THE MONUMENT.

But, neighbor, ef they prove their claim  
at law,  
The best way is to settle, an' not jaw.  
An' don't le' s mutter 'bout the awfle  
bricks  
We'll give 'em, ef we ketch 'em in a  
fix :  
That 'ere's most frequently the kin' o'  
talk  
Of critters can't be kicked to toe the  
chalk ;  
Your " You'll see *nez'* time ! " an'  
" Look out bummy ! "  
'Most ollers ends in eatin' umble-pie.  
'T wun't pay to scringe to England :  
will it pay  
To fear that meaner bully, old " They 'll  
say " ?  
Suppose they *du* say : words are drefle  
bores,  
But they ain't quite so bad ez seventy-  
fours.  
Wut England wants is jest a wedge to  
fit  
Where it 'll help to widen out our split :  
She's found her wedge, an' 't ain't for  
us to come  
An' lend the beetle that's to drive it  
home.  
For growed-up folks like us 't would be  
a scandle,  
When we git sarsed, to fly right off the  
handle.  
England ain't *all* bad, coz she thinks  
us blind :  
Ef she can't change her skin, she can  
her mind ;  
An' we shall see her change it double-  
quick,  
Soon ez we 've proved that we're a-goin'  
to lick.  
She an' Columby's gut to be fas' friends :  
For the world prospers by their privit  
ends :  
'T would put the clock back all o' fifty  
years  
Ef they should fall together by the ears.

## THE BRIDGE.

I 'gree to thet ; she's nigh us to wut  
France is ;  
But then she 'll hev to make the fust  
advances ;  
We've gut pride, tu, an' gut it by good  
rights,  
An' ketch *me* stoopin' to pick up the  
mites  
O' condescension she 'll be lettin' fall  
When she finds out we ain't dead arter  
all !  
I tell ye wut, it takes more 'n one good  
week  
Afore *my* nose forgets it's hed a tweak.

## THE MONUMENT.

She 'll come out right bummy, thet I 'll  
engage,  
Soon ez she gits to seein' we're of age ;  
This talkin' down o' hers ain't wuth  
a fuss ;  
It's nat'ral ez nut likin' 't is to us ;  
Ef we're agoin' to prove we *be* growed-  
up,  
'T wunt be by barkin' like a tarrier pup,  
But turnin' to an' makin' things ez  
good  
Ez wut we're ollers braggin' that we  
could ;  
We're boun' to be good friends, an' so  
we 'd oughto,  
In spite of all the fools both sides the  
water.

## THE BRIDGE.

I b'lieve thet's so ; but hearken in your  
ear, —  
I 'm older 'n you, — Peace wun't keep  
house with Fear :  
Ef you want peace, the thing you 've  
gut to du  
Is jes' to show you're up to fightin', tu.  
*I* recollect how sailors' rights was won,  
Yard locked in yard, hot gun-lip kissin'  
gun :  
Why, afore thet, John Bull sot up thet  
he  
Hed gut a kind o' mortgage on the sea ;  
You 'd thought he held by Gran'ther  
Adam's will,  
An' ef you knuckle down, *he* 'll think  
so still.  
Better thet all our ships an' all their  
crews  
Should sink to rot in ocean's dreamless  
ooze,

Each torn flag wavin' challenge ez it went,  
 An' each dumb gun a brave man's moniment,  
 Than seek sech peace ez only cowards crave:  
 Give *me* the peace of dead men or of brave!

## THE MONIMENT.

I say, ole boy, it ain't the Glorious Fourth:  
 You 'd oughto larned 'fore this wut talk wuz worth.  
 It ain't *our* nose thet gits put out o' jint;  
 It's England thet gives up her dearest pint.  
 We've gut, I tell ye now, enough to du In our own fem'ly fight, afore we're thru.  
 I hoped, las' spring, jest arter Sumter's shame,  
 When every flag-staff flapped its tethered flame,  
 An' all the people, startled from their doubt,  
 Come must'rin' to the flag with sech a shout, —  
 I hoped to see things settled 'fore this fall,  
 The Rebbles licked, Jeff Davis hanged, an' all;  
 Then come Bull Run, an' *sence* then I've ben waitin'  
 Like boys in Jennoary thaw for skatin',  
 Nothin' to du but watch my shadder's trace  
 Swing, iike a ship at anchor, roun' my base,  
 With daylight's flood an' ebb: it's gittin' slow,  
 An' I 'most think we'd better let 'em go.  
 I tell ye wut, this war's a-goin' to cost —

## THE BRIDGE.

An' I tell *you* it wun't be money lost;  
 Taxes milks dry, but, neighbor, you 'll allow  
 Thet havin' things onsettled kills the cow:  
 We've gut to fix this thing for good an' all;  
 It's no use buildin' wut's a-goin' to fall.  
 I'm older 'n you, an' I've seen things an men,

An' *my* experunce, — tell ye wut it's ben:  
 Folks thet worked thorough was the ones thet thriv,  
 But bad work follers ye ez long's ye live;  
 You can't git red on 't; jest ez sure ez sin,  
 It's ollers askin' to be done agin:  
 Ef we should part, it would n't be a week  
 'Fore your soft-soddered peace would spring aleak.  
 We've turned our cuffs up, but, to put her thru,  
 We must git mad an' off with jackets, tu;  
 'T wun't du to think thet killin' ain't perlite, —  
 You've gut to be in airnest, ef you fight;  
 Why, two-thirds o' the Rebbles 'ould cut dirt,  
 Ef they once thought thet Guv'ment meant to hurt;  
 An' I *du* wish our Gin'ral's hed in mind  
 The folks in front more than the folks behind;  
 You wun't do much until you think it's God,  
 An' not constitoounts, thet holds the rod;  
 We want some more o' Gideon's sword,  
 I jedge,  
 For proclamations ha'n't no gret of edge;  
 There's nothin' for a cancer but the knife,  
 Unless you set by 't more than by your life.  
 I've seen hard times; I see a war begun  
 Thet folks thet love their bellies never 'd won;  
 Pharo's lean kine hung on for seven long year;  
 But when 't was done, we did n't count it dear.  
 Why, law an' order, honor, civil right,  
 Ef they *ain't* wuth it, wut *is* wuth a fight?  
 I'm older 'n you: the plough, the axe, the mill,  
 All kin's o' labor an' all kin's o' skill,  
 Would be a rabbit in a wile-cat's claw,  
 Ef 't warn't for thet slow critter, 'stablished law;  
 Onsettled *thet*, an' all the world goes whiz,



A screw 's gut loose in everythin' there  
is :  
Good buttresses once settled, don't you  
fret  
An' stir 'em; take a bridge's word for  
thet !  
Young folks are smart, but all ain't good  
thet 's new ;  
I guess the gran'thers they knowed sun-  
thin', tu.

## THE MONIMENT.

Amen to thet ! build sure in the begin-  
nin' :  
An' then don't never tech the underpin-  
nin' :  
Th' older a guv'ment is, the better 't  
suits ;  
New ones hunt folks's corns out like new  
boots :  
Change jes' for change, is like them big  
hotels  
Where they shift plates, an' let ye live  
on smells.

## THE BRIDGE.

Wal, don't give up afore the ship goes  
down :  
It 's a stiff gale, but Providence wun't  
drown ;  
An' God wun't leave us yit to sink or  
swim,  
Ef we don't fail to du wut's right by  
Him.  
This land o' urn, I tell ye, 's gut to be  
A better country than man ever see.  
I feel my sperit swellin' with a cry  
Thet seems to say, "Break forth an'  
prophesy !"  
O strange New World, thet yit wast  
never young,  
Whose youth from thee by gripin' need  
was wrung,  
Brown foundlin' o' the woods, whose  
baby-bed  
Was prowled roun' by the Injun's crack-  
lin' tread,  
An' who grew'st strong thru shifts an'  
wants an' pains,  
Nussed by stern men with empires in  
their brains,  
Who saw in vision their young Ishmel  
strain  
With each hard hand a vassal ocean's  
mane,  
Thou, skilled by Freedom an' by gret  
events

To pitch new States ez Old-World men  
pitch tents,  
Thou, taught by Fate to know Jehovah's  
plan  
Thet man's devices can't unmake a man,  
An' whose free latch-string never was  
drawed in  
Against the poorest child of Adam's  
kin, —  
The grave's not dug where traitor  
hands shall lay  
In fearful haste thy murdered corse  
away !  
I see —  
Jest here some dogs begun to bark,  
So thet I lost old Concord's last remark :  
I listened long, but all I seemed to hear  
Was dead leaves gossipin' on some birch-  
trees near ;  
But ez they hed n't no gret things to  
say,  
An' sed 'em often, I come right away,  
An', walkin' home'ards, jest to pass the  
time,  
I put some thoughts thet bothered me  
in rhyme ;  
I hain't hed time to fairly try 'em on,  
But here they be — it 's

## JONATHAN TO JOHN.

It don't seem hardly right, John,  
When both my hands was full,  
To stump me to a fight, John, —  
Your cousin, tu, John Bull !  
Ole Uncle S. sez he, " I guess  
We know it now," sez he,  
" The lion's paw is all the law,  
Accordin' to J. B.,  
Thet 's fit for you an' me !"

You wonder why we're hot, John ?  
Your mark wuz on the guns,  
The neutral guns, thet shot, John,  
Our brothers an' our sons :  
Ole Uncle S. sez he, " I guess  
There 's human blood," sez he,  
" By fits an' starts, in Yankee hearts,  
Though 't may surprise J. B.  
More 'n it would you an' me."

Ef I turned mad dogs loose, John,  
On *your* front-parlor stairs,  
Would it jest meet your views, John,  
To wait an' sue their heirs ?

Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,  
I on'y guess," sez he,  
"Thet ef Vattel on *his* toes fell,  
'T would kind o' rile J. B.,  
Ez wal ez you an' me!"

Who made the law thet hurts, John,  
*Heads I win, — ditto tails?*  
"J. B." was on his shirts, John,  
Unless my memory fails,  
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess  
(I'm good at thet)," sez he,  
"Thet sauce for goose ain't *jest* the  
juice  
For ganders with J. B.,  
No more 'n with you or me!"

When your rights was our wrongs,  
John,  
You did n't stop for fuss, —  
Britanny's trident prongs, John,  
Was good 'nough law for us.  
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,  
Though physic 's good," sez he,  
"It does n't foller thet he can swaller  
Prescriptions signed '*J. B.*,'  
Put up by you an' me!"

We own the ocean, tu, John :  
You mus' n' take it hard,  
Ef we can't think with you, John.  
It's *jest* your own back-yard.  
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,  
Ef *thet*'s his claim," sez he,  
"The fencin'-stuff 'll cost enough  
To bust up friend J. B.,  
Ez wal ez you an' me!"

Why talk so drefle big, John,  
Of honor when it meant  
You did n't care a fig, John,  
But *jest* for *ten per cent?*  
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess  
He's like the rest," sez he :  
"When all is done, it's number one  
Thet's nearest to J. B.,  
Ez wal ez t' you an' me!"

We give the critters back, John,  
Cos Abram thought 't was right ;  
It warn't your bullyin' clack, John,  
Provokin' us to fight.  
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess  
We've a hard row," sez he,  
"To hoe *jest* now ; but thet somehow,  
May happen to J. B.,  
Ez wal ez you an' me!"

We ain't so weak an' poor, John,  
With twenty million people,  
An' close to every door, John,  
A school-house an' a steeple.  
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,  
It is a fact," sez he,  
"The surest plan to make a Man  
Is, think him so, J. B.,  
Ez much ez you or me!"

Our folks believe in Law, John ;  
An' it's for her sake, now,  
They've left the axe an' saw, John,  
The anvil an' the plough.  
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,  
Ef 't warn't for law," sez he,  
"There'd be one shindy from here to  
Indy ;  
An' thet don't suit J. B.  
(When 't ain't 'twixt you an' me!)"

We know we've got a cause, John,  
Thet's honest, just, an' true ;  
We thought 't would win applause, John,  
Ef nowheres else, from you.  
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess  
His love of right," sez he,  
"Hangs by a rotten fibre o' cotton :  
There's natur' in J. B.,  
Ez wal 'z in you an' me!"

The South says, "*Poor folks down!*"  
John,  
An' "*All men up!*" say we, —  
White, yaller, black, an' brown, John :  
Now which is your idee ?  
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,  
John preaches wal," sez he ;  
"But, sermon thru, an' come to *du*,  
Why, there's the old J. B.  
A crowdin' you an' me!"

Shall it be love, or hate, John ?  
It's you thet's to decide ;  
Ain't *your* bonds held by Fate, John,  
Like all the world's beside ?  
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess  
Wise men forgive," sez he,  
"But not forgit ; an' some time yit  
Thet truth may strike J. B.,  
Ez wal ez you an' me!"

God means to make this land, John,  
Clear thru, from sea to sea,  
Believe an' understand, John,  
The *wouth* o' bein' free.

Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,  
 God's price is high," sez he ;  
 "But nothin' else than wut He sells  
 Wears long, an' thet J. B.  
 May larn, like you an' me !"

—  
 No. III.

BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN, ESQ., TO  
 MR. HOSEA BIGLOW.

With the following Letter from the REV-  
 EREND HOMER WILBUR, A. M.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE ATLANTIC  
 MONTHLY.

JAALAM, 7th Feb., 1862.

RESPECTED FRIENDS, — If I know myself, — and surely a man can hardly be supposed to have overpassed the limit of fourscore years without attaining to some proficiency in that most useful branch of learning (*e celo descendit*, says the pagan poet), — I have no great smack of that weakness which would press upon the publick attention any matter pertaining to my private affairs. But since the following letter of Mr. Sawin contains not only a direct allusion to myself, but that in connection with a topick of interest to all those engaged in the publick ministrations of the sanctuary, I may be pardoned for touching briefly thereupon. Mr. Sawin was never a stated attendant upon my preaching, — never, as I believe, even an occasional one, since the erection of the new house (where we now worship) in 1845. He did, indeed, for a time, supply a not unacceptible bass in the choir; but, whether on some umbrage (*omnibus hoc vitium est cantoribus*) taken against the bass-viol, then, and till his decease in 1850 (*æt.* 77,) under the charge of Mr. Asaph Perley, or, as was reported by others, on account of an imminent subscription for a new bell, he thenceforth absented himself from all outward and visible communion. Yet he seems to have preserved (*altâ mente repositum*), as it were, in the pickle of a mind soured by prejudice, a lasting *scunner*, as he would call it, against our staid and decent form of worship; for I would rather in that wise interpret his fling, than suppose that any chance tares sown by my pulpit discourses should survive so long, while good seed too often fails to root itself. I humbly trust that I have no personal feeling in the matter; though I know that, if we sound any

man deep enough, our lead shall bring up the mud of human nature at last. The Bretons believe in an evil spirit which they call *ar c'houskezik*, whose office it is to make the congregation drowsy; and though I have never had reason to think that he was specially busy among my flock, yet have I seen enough to make me sometimes regret the hinged seats of the ancient meeting-house, whose lively clatter, not unwillingly intensified by boys beyond eyeshot of the tithing-man, served at intervals as a wholesome *réveil*. It is true, I have numbered among my parishioners some who are proof against the prophylactick fennel, nay, whose gift of somnolence rivalled that of the Cretan Rip Van Winkle, Epimenides, and who, nevertheless, complained not so much of the substance as of the length of my (by them unheard) discourses. Some ingenious persons of a philosophick turn have assured us that our pulpits were set too high, and that the soporifick tendency increased with the ratio of the angle in which the hearer's eye was constrained to seek the preacher. This were a curious topick for investigation. There can be no doubt that some sermons are pitched too high, and I remember many struggles with the drowsy fiend in my youth. Happy Saint Anthony of Padua, whose finny acolytes, however they might profit, could never murmur! *Quare fremuerunt gentes?* Who is he that can twice a week be inspired, or has eloquence (*ut ita dicam*) always on tap? A good man, and, next to David, a sacred poet (himself, haply, not inexpert of evil in this particular), has said, —

"The worst speak something good: if all want sense,  
 God takes a text and preacheth patience."

There are one or two other points in Mr. Sawin's letter which I would also briefly animadvert upon. And first, concerning the claim he sets up to a certain superiority of blood and lineage in the people of our Southern States, now unhappily in rebellion against lawful authority and their own better interests. There is a sort of opinions, anachronisms at once and anachorisms, foreign both to the age and the country, that maintain a feeble and buzzing existence, scarce to be called life, like winter flies, which in mild weather crawl out from obscure nooks and crannies to expatiate in the sun, and sometimes acquire vigor enough to disturb with their enforced familiarity the studious hours of the scholar. One of the most stupid and pertinacious of these is the theory that the Southern States were settled by a class of emigrants



from the Old World socially superior to those who founded the institutions of New England. The Virginians especially lay claim to this generosity of lineage, which were of no possible account, were it not for the fact that such superstitions are sometimes not without their effect on the course of human affairs. The early adventurers to Massachusetts at least paid their passages; no felons were ever shipped thither; and though it be true that many debased younger brothers of what are called good families may have sought refuge in Virginia, it is equally certain that a great part of the early deportations thither were the sweepings of the London streets and the leavings of the London stews. It was this my Lord Bacon had in mind when he wrote: "It is a shameful and unblessed thing to take the scum of people and wicked condemned men to be the people with whom you plant." That certain names are found there is nothing to the purpose, for, even had an *alias* been beyond the invention of the knaves of that generation, it is known that servants were often called by their masters' names, as slaves are now. On what the heralds call the spindle side, some, at least, of the oldest Virginian families are descended from matrons who were exported and sold for so many hogsheads of tobacco the head. So notorious was this, that it became one of the jokes of contemporary playwrights, not only that men bankrupt in purse and character were "food for the Plantations" (and this before the settlement of New England), but also that any drab would suffice to wive such pitiful adventurers. "Never choose a wife as if you were going to Virginia," says Middleton in one of his comedies. The mule is apt to forget all but the equine side of his pedigree. How early the counterfeit nobility of the Old Dominion became a topic of ridicule in the Mother Country may be learned from a play of Mrs. Behn's, founded on the Rebellion of Bacon: for even these kennels of literature may yield a fact or two to pay the raking. Mrs. Flirt, the Keeper of a Virginia ordinary, calls herself the daughter of a baronet "undone in the late rebellion," — her father having in truth been a tailor, — and three of the Council, assuming to themselves an equal splendor of origin, are shown to have been, one "a broken exciseman who came over a poor servant," another a tinker transported for theft, and the third "a common pick-pocket often flogged at the cart's tail." The ancestry of South Carolina will as little pass muster at the Herald's Visitation, though I hold them to have been more reputable, inasmuch as many of them were

honest tradesmen and artisans, in some measure exiles for conscience' sake, who would have smiled at the high-flying nonsense of their descendants. Some of the more respectable were Jews. The absurdity of supposing a population of eight millions all sprung from gentle loins in the course of a century and a half is too manifest for confutation. But of what use to discuss the matter? An expert genealogist will provide any solvent man with a *genus et proavos* to order. My Lord Burleigh used to say, with Aristotle and the Emperor Frederick II. to back him, that "nobility was ancient riches," whence also the Spanish were wont to call their nobles *ricos hombres*, and the aristocracy of America are the descendants of those who first became wealthy, by whatever means. Petroleum will in this wise be the source of much good blood among our posterity. The aristocracy of the South, such as it is, has the shallowest of all foundations, for it is only skin-deep, — the most odious of all, for, while affecting to despise trade, it traces its origin to a successful traffick in men, women, and children, and still draws its chief revenues thence. And though, as Doctor Chamberlayne consolingly says in his *Present State of England*, "to become a Merchant of Foreign Commerce, without serving any Apprentisage, hath been allowed no disparagement to a Gentleman born, especially to a younger Brother," yet I conceive that he would hardly have made a like exception in favour of the particular trade in question. Oddly enough this trade reverses the ordinary standards of social respectability no less than of morals, for the retail and domestick is as creditable as the wholesale and foreign is degrading to him who follows it. Are our morals, then, no better than *mores* after all? I do not believe that such aristocracy as exists at the South (for I hold with Marius, *fortissimum quemque generosissimum*) will be found an element of anything like persistent strength in war, — thinking the saying of Lord Bacon (whom one quaintly called *inductionis dominus et Verulamii*) as true as it is pithy, that "the more gentlemen, ever the lower books of subsidies." It is odd enough as an historical precedent, that, while the fathers of New England were laying deep in religion, education, and freedom the basis of a polity which has substantially outlasted any then existing, the first work of the founders of Virginia, as may be seen in Wingfield's *Memorial*, was conspiracy and rebellion, — odder yet, as showing the changes which are wrought by circumstance, that the first insurrection in South Carolina was against the aristocratical scheme of the Proprietary

Government. I do not find that the cuticular aristocracy of the South has added anything to the refinements of civilization except the carrying of bowie-knives and the chewing of tobacco, — a high-toned Southern gentleman being commonly not only *quadrumanous* but *quidruminant*.

I confess that the present letter of Mr. Sawin increases my doubts as to the sincerity of the convictions which he professes, and I am inclined to think that the triumph of the legitimate Government, sure sooner or later to take place, will find him and a large majority of his newly adopted fellow-citizens (who hold with Dædalus, the primal sinner-on-the-fence, that *medium tenere tutissimum*) original Union men. The criticisms towards the close of his letter on certain of our failings are worthy to be seriously perpended; for he is not, as I think, without a spice of vulgar shrewdness. *Fas est et ab hoste doceri*: there is no reckoning without your host. As to the good-nature in us which he seems to gird at, while I would not consecrate a chapel, as they have not scrupled to do in France, to *Nôtre Dame de la Haine* (Our Lady of Hate), yet I cannot forget that the corruption of good-nature is the generation of laxity of principle. Good-nature is our national characteristic; and though it be, perhaps, nothing more than a culpable weakness or cowardice, when it leads us to put up tamely with manifold impositions and breaches of implied contracts, (as too frequently in our public conveyances,) it becomes a positive crime, when it leads us to look unresentfully on peculation, and to regard treason to the best Government that ever existed as something with which a gentleman may shake hands without soiling his fingers. I do not think the gallows-tree the most profitable member of our *Sylva*; but, since it continues to be planted, I would fain see a Northern limb ingrafted on it, that it may bear some other fruit than loyal Tennesseans.

A relic has recently been discovered on the east bank of Bushy Brook in North Jaalam, which I conceive to be an inscription in Runick characters relating to the early expedition of the Northmen to this continent. I shall make fuller investigations, and communicate the result in due season.

Respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

HOMER WILBUR, A. M.

P. S. — I inclose a year's subscription from Deacon Tinkham.

I HED it on my main' las' time, when I  
to write ye started,  
To tech the leadin' featur' o' my gittin'  
me convarted;  
But, ez my letters hez to go clearn roun'  
by way o' Cuby,  
'T wun't seem no staler now than then,  
by th' time it gits where you be.  
You know up North, though secs an'  
things air plenty ez you please,  
Ther' warn't nut one on 'em that come  
jes' square with my idees:  
They all on 'em wuz too much mixed  
with Covenants o' Works,  
An' would hev answered jest ez wal for  
Afrikins an' Turks,  
Fer where 's a Christian's privilege an'  
his rewards ensuin',  
Ef 'tain't perfessin' right an eend  
'thout nary need o' doin'?'  
I dessay they suit workin'-folks thet  
ain't noways pertic'lar,  
But nut your Southun gen'leman thet  
keeps his parpendic'lar;  
I don't blame nary man thet casts his  
lot along o' his folks,  
But ef you cal'late to save me, 't must  
be with folks thet *is* folks;  
Cov'nants o' works go 'ginst my grain,  
but down here I've found out  
The true fus'-femly A 1 plan, — here 's  
how it come about.  
When I fus' sot up with Miss S., sez she  
to me, sez she,  
"Without you git religion, Sir, the  
thing can't never be;  
Nut but wut I respect," sez she, "your  
intellectle part,  
But you wun't noways du for me athout  
a change o' heart:  
Nothun religion works wal North, but  
it 's ez soft ez spruce,  
Compared to ourn, for keepin' sound,"  
sez she, "upon the goose;  
A day's experence 'd prove to ye, ez  
easy 'z pull a trigger,  
It takes the Southun pint o' view to  
raise ten bales a nigger;  
You 'll fin' thet human natur', South,  
ain't wholesome more 'n skin-deep,  
An' once 't a darkie's took with it, he  
wun't be wuth his keep."  
"How *shell* I git it, Ma'am?" sez I.  
"Attend the nex' camp-meetin',"  
Sez she, "an' it 'll come to ye ez cheap  
ez onbleached sheetin'."



Wal, so I went along an' hearn most an  
 impressive sarnon  
 About besprinklin' Afriky with fourth-  
 proof dew o' Harmon:  
 He did n't put no weakuin' in, but gin it  
 tu us hot,  
 'Z ef he an' Satan'd ben two bulls in  
 one five-acre lot:  
 I don't purtend to foller him, but give  
 ye jes' the heads;  
 For pulpit ellerkence, you know, 'most  
 ollers kin' o' spreads.  
 Ham's seed wuz gin to us in chairge, an'  
 should n't we be li'ble  
 In Kingdom Come, ef we kep' back  
 their priv'lege in the Bible?  
 The cusses an' the promerses make one  
 gret chain, an' ef  
 You snake one link out here, one there,  
 how much on 't ud be lef?  
 All things wuz gin to man for 's use, his  
 sarvice, an' delight;  
 An' don't the Greek an' Hebrew words  
 thet mean a Man mean White?  
 Ain't it belittlin' the Good Book in all  
 its proudes' featur  
 To think 't wuz wrote for black an'  
 brown an' 'lasses-colored creaturs,  
 Thet could n' read it, ef they would,  
 nor ain't by lor allowed to,  
 But ough' to take wut we think suits  
 their naturs, an' be proud to?  
 Warn't it more prof'table to bring your  
 raw materil thru  
 Where you can work it inta grace an'  
 inta cotton, tu,  
 Than sendin' missionaries out where  
 fevers might defeat 'em,  
 An' ef the butcher did n' call, their  
 p'rishioners might eat 'em?  
 An' then, agin, wut airthly use? Nor  
 't warn't our fault, in so fur  
 Ez Yankee skippers would keep on a-  
 totin' on 'em over.  
 'T improved the whites by savin' 'em  
 from ary need o' wurkin',  
 An' kep' the blacks from bein' lost thru  
 idleness an' shirkin';  
 We took to 'em ez nat'ral ez a barn-owl  
 doos to mice,  
 An' hed our hull time on our hands to  
 keep us out o' vice;  
 It made us feel ez pop'lar ez a hen doos  
 with one chicken,  
 An' fill our place in Natur's scale by  
 givin' 'em a lickin':

For why should Cæsar git his dues  
 more 'n Juno, Pomp, an' Cuffy?  
 It's justifyin' Ham to spare a nigger  
 when he's stuffy.  
 Where 'd their soles go tu, like to know,  
 ef we should let 'em ketch  
 Freeknowledgeism an' Fourierism an'  
 Speritoolism an' sech?  
 When Satan sets himself to work to  
 raise his very bes' muss,  
 He scatters roun' onscriptur'l views re-  
 latin' to Ones'mus.  
 You'd ough' to seen, though, how his  
 facts an' argymunce an' figgers  
 Drawed tears o' real conviction from a  
 lot o' pen'tent niggers!  
 It warn't like Wilbur's meetin', where  
 you 're shet up in a pew,  
 Your dickeys sorrin' off your ears, an'  
 bilin' to be thru;  
 Ther' wuz a tent clost by thet hed a kag  
 o' sunthin' in it,  
 Where you could go, ef you wuz dry,  
 an' damp ye in a minute;  
 An' ef you did dror off a spell, ther'  
 wuz n't no occasion  
 To lose the thread, because, ye see, he  
 bellered like all Bashan.  
 It's dry work follerin' argymunce an'  
 so, 'twix' this an' thet,  
 I felt conviction weighin' down somehow  
 inside my hat;  
 It growed an' growed like Jonah's gourd,  
 a kin' o' whirlin' ketch'd me,  
 Ontil I fin'ly clean gin out an' owned  
 up thet hed' fetch'd me;  
 An' when nine tenths o' th' perrish  
 took to tumblin' roun' an' hollerin',  
 I did n' fin' no gret in th' way o' turnin'  
 tur'an' follerin'.  
 Soon ez Miss S. see thet, sez she,  
 "Thet 's wut I call wuth seein'!  
 Thet 's actin' like a reas'nable an' in-  
 tellectle bein'!"  
 An' so we fin'ly made it up, concluded  
 to hitch hosses,  
 An' here I be 'n my ellermunt among  
 creation's bosses;  
 Arter I'd drawed sech heaps o' blanks,  
 Fortin at last hez sent a prize,  
 An' cuss me for a shinin' light o' mis-  
 sionary entaprise.

This leads me to another pint on which  
 I've changed my plan  
 O' thinkin' so 's 't I might become a  
 straight-out Southun man.



Miss S. (her maiden name wuz Higgs, o' the fus' fem'ly here)  
 On her Ma's side 's all Juggernot, on Pa's all Cavileer,  
 An' sence I've married into her an' stept into her shoes,  
 It ain't more'n nateral thet I should modderfy my views :  
 I've ben a-readin' in Debow until I've fairly gut  
 So 'nlightened thet I'd full ez lives ha' ben a Dook ez nut ;  
 An' when we've laid ye all out stiff, an' Jeff hez gut his crown,  
 An' comes to pick his nobles out, *wun't* this child be in town !  
 We'll hev an Age o' Chivverlry surpassin' Mister Burke's,  
 Where every fem'ly is fus'-best an' nary white man works :  
 Our system's sech, the thing 'll root ez easy ez a tater ;  
 For while your lords in furrin parts ain't noways marked by natur',  
 Nor sot apart from ornery folks in features nor in figgers,  
 Ef ourn 'll keep their faces washed, you 'll know 'em from their niggers.  
 Ain't *sech* things wuth secedin' for, an' gittin' red o' you  
 Thet waller in your low idees, an' will tell all is blue ?  
 Fact is, we *air* a diff'rent race, an' I, for one, don't see,  
 Sech havin' ollers ben the case, how w' ever *did* agree.  
 It's sunthin' thet you lab'rin'-folks up North hed ough' to think on,  
 Thet Higgses can't bemean themselves to rulin' by a Lincoln, —  
 Thet men, (an' guv'nors, tu,) thet hez sech Normal names ez Pickens,  
 Accustomed to no kin' o' work, 'thout 't is to givin' lickins,  
 Can't masure votes with folks thet get their livins from their farms,  
 An' prob'ly think thet Law's ez good ez hev'in' coats o' arms.  
 Sence I've ben here, I've hired a chap to look about for me  
 To git me a transplantable an' thrifty fem'ly-tree,  
 An' he tells *me* the Sawins is ez much o' Normal blood  
 Ez Pickens an' the rest on 'em, an' older 'n Noah's flood.

Your Normal schools wun't turn ye into Normals, for it's clear,  
 Ef eddykatin' done the thing, they'd be some skurcer here.  
 Pickenses, Boggses, Pettuses, Magoffins, Letchers, Polks, —  
 Where can you scare up names like them among your mudsill folks ?  
 Ther's nothin' to compare with em', you 'd fin', ef you should glance,  
 Among the tip-top femerlies in Englan', nor in France :  
 I've hearn from 'sponsible men whose word wuz full ez good 's their note,  
 Men thet can run their face for drinks, an' keep a Sunday coat,  
 Thet they wuz all on 'em come down, an' come down pooty fur,  
 From folks thet, 'thout their crowns wuz on, ou' doors would n' never stir,  
 Nor thet ther' warn't a Southun man but wut wuz *primy fashy*  
 O' the bes' blood in Europe, yis, an' Afriky an' Ashy :  
 Sech bein' the case, is 't likely we should bend like cotton wickin',  
 Or set down under anythin' so low-lived ez a lickin' ?  
 More'n this, — hain't we the literatoor an science, tu, by gorry ?  
 Hain't we them intellectle twins, them giants, Simms an' Maury,  
 Each with full twice the ushle brains, like nothin' thet I know,  
 'thout 't wuz a double-headed calf I see once to a show ?  
 For all thet, I warn't jest at fust in favor o' secedin' ;  
 I wuz for layin' low a spell to find out where 't wuz leadin',  
 For hev'in' South-Carliny try her hand at seprinationin',  
 She takin' resks an' findin' funds, an' we co-operationin', —  
 I mean a kin' o' hangin' roun' an' settin' on the fence,  
 Till Prov'dunce pinte how to jump an' save the most expense ;  
 I recollected thet 'ere mine o' lead to Shiraz Centre  
 Thet bust up Jabez Pettibone, an' didn't want to ventur'  
 'Fore I wuz sartin wut come out ud pay for wut went in,  
 For swappin' silver off for lead ain't the sure way to win ;

(An', fact, it *docs* look now ez though —  
but folks must live an' larn —  
We should git lead, an' more 'n we  
want, out o' the Old Consarn ;  
But when I see a man so wise an' honest  
ez Buchanan  
A-lettin' us hev all the forts an' all the  
arms an' cannon,  
Admittin' we wuz nat'lly right an' you  
wuz nat'lly wrong,  
Coz you wuz lab'rin'-folks an' we wuz  
wut they call *bong-tong*,  
An' coz there warn't no fight in ye  
more 'n in a mashed potater,  
While two o' *us* can't skurcely meet but  
wut we fight by natur',  
An' th' ain't a bar-room here would pay  
for openin' on 't a night,  
Without it giv the priverlege o' bein'  
shot at sight,  
Which proves we 're Natur's noblemen,  
with whom it don't surprize  
The British aristoxty should feel boun'  
to sympathize, —  
Seen' all this, an' seein', tu, the thing  
wuz strikin' roots  
While Uncle Sam sot still in hopes thet  
some one 'd bring his boots,  
I thought th' ole Union's hoops wuz off,  
an' let myself be sucked in  
To rise a peg an' jine the crowd thet  
went for reconstructin', —  
Thet is to hev the partnership under  
th' ole name continer  
Jest ez it wuz, we drorrin' pay, you  
findin' bone an' sinner, —  
On'y to put it in the bond, an' enter 't  
in the journals,  
Thet you 're the nat'ral rank an' file,  
an' we the nat'ral kurnels.

Now this I thought a fees'ble plan, thet  
'ud work smooth ez grease,  
Sutin' the Nineteenth Century an'  
Upper Ten ideas,  
An' there I meant to stick, an' so did  
most o' th' leaders, tu,  
Coz we all thought the chance wuz good  
o' puttin' on it thru ;  
But Jeff he hit upon a way o' helpin' on  
us forrard  
By bein' unannermous, — a trick you  
ain't quite up to, Norrard.  
A Baldin hain't no more 'f a chance  
with them new apple-corers  
An' folks's oppersition views against  
the Ringtail Roarers ;

They 'll take 'em out on him 'bout east,  
— one canter on a rail  
Makes a man feel unannermous ez Jonah  
in the whale ;  
Or ef he's a slow-moulded cuss thet  
can't seem quite t' 'gree,  
He gits the noose by tellergraph upon  
the nighes' tree :  
Their mission-work with Afrikins hez  
put 'em up, thet 's sartin,  
To all the mos' across-lot ways o'  
preachin' an' convartin' ;  
I 'll bet my hat th' ain't nary priest,  
nor all on em together,  
Thet cairs conviction to the min' like  
Reveren' Taranfeather ;  
Why, he sot up with me one night, an'  
labored to sech purpose,  
Thet (ez an owl by daylight 'mongst a  
flock o' teazin' chirpers  
Sees clearer 'n mud the wickedness o'  
eatin' little birds)  
I see my error an' agreed to shen i  
arterwurds ;  
An' I should say, (to jedge our folks by  
facs in my possession,)  
Thet three 's Unannermous where one 's  
a 'Riginal Secession ;  
So it's a thing you fellers North may  
safely bet your chink on,  
Thet we 're all water-proofed agin th'  
usurpin' reign o' Lincoln.

Jeff's *some*. He's gut another plan  
thet hez pertic'lar merits,  
In givin' things a cheerfe look an' stiff-  
nin' loose-hung sperits ;  
For while your million papers, wut with  
lyin' an' discussin',  
Keep folks's tempers all on eend a-fum-  
in' an a-fussin',  
A-wondrin' this an' guessin' thet, an'  
dreadin' every night  
The breechin' o' the Univarse 'll break  
afore it 's light,  
Our papers don't purtend to print on'y  
wut Guv'ment choose,  
An' thet insures us all to git the very  
best o' noose :  
Jeff hev it of all sorts an' kines, an'  
sarves it out ez wanted,  
So 's 't every man gits wut he likes an'  
nobody ain't scanted ;  
Sometimes it 's vict'ries (they're 'bout  
all ther' is that 's cheap down here,)  
Sometimes it 's France an' England on  
the jump to interfere.

Fact is, the less the people know o' wut ther' is a-doin',  
 The hendier 't is for Guv'ment, sence it henders trouble brewin';  
 An' nooze is like a shinplaster, — it's good, ef you believe it,  
 Or, wut's all same, the other man thet's goin' to receive it :'  
 Ef you've a son in th' army, wy, it's comfortin' to hear  
 He'll hev no gretter resk to run than seein' th' in my's rear,  
 Coz, ef an F. F. looks at 'em, they ollers break an' run,  
 Or wilt right down ez debtors will thet stumble on a dun,  
 (An' this, ef an'thin', proves the wuth o' proper fem'ly pride,  
 Fer sech mean shucks ez creditors are all on Lincoln's side);  
 Ef I hev scrip thet wun't go off no more 'n a Belgin rifle,  
 An' read thet it's at par on 'Change, it makes me feel deli'fible;  
 It's cheerin', tu, where every man mus' fortify his bed,  
 To hear thet Freedom's the one thing our darkies mos'ly dread,  
 An' thet experunce, time'n' agin, to Dixie's Land hez shown  
 Ther' 's nothin' like a powder-cask fer a stiddy corner-stone;  
 Ain't it ez good ez nuts, when salt is sellin' by the ounce  
 For its own weight in Treash'ry-bons, (ef bought in small amounts,)  
 When even whiskey's gittin' skurce an' sugar can't be found,  
 To know thet all the ellerments o' luxury abound?  
 An' don't it glorify sal'-pork, to come to understand  
 It's wut the Richmon' editors call fatness o' the land!  
 Nex' thing to knowin' you're well off is *nut* to know when y' ain't;  
 An' ef Jeff says all's goin' wal, who'll ventur' t' say it ain't?  
 This cairn the Constitooshun roun' ez Jeff doos in his hat  
 Is hendier a drefle sight, an' comes more kin' o' pat.  
 I tell ye wut, my jedgment is you're pooty sure to fail,  
 Ez long 'z the head keeps turnin' back for counsel to the tail :

Th' advantiges of our consarn for bein' prompt air gret,  
 While, 'long o' Congress, you can't strike, 'f you git an iron het;  
 They bother roun' with argoooin', an' va-r'ous sorts o' foolin',  
 To make sure ef it's leg'ly het, an' all the while it's coolin',  
 So's 't when you come to strike, it ain't no gret to wish ye j'y on,  
 An' hurts the hammer 'z much or more ez wut it doos the iron,  
 Jeff don't allow no jawin'-sprees for three months at a stretch,  
 Knowin' the ears long speeches suits air mostly made to metch;  
 He jes' ropes in your tonguey chaps an' reg'lar ten-inch bores  
 An' lets 'em play at Congress, ef they'll du it with closed doors;  
 So they ain't no more bothersome than ef we'd took an' sunk 'em,  
 An' yit enjy th' exclusive right to one another's Buncombe  
 'thout doin' nobody no hurt, an' 'thout its costin' nothin',  
 Their pay bein' jes' Confedrit funds, they findin' keep an' clothin';  
 They taste the sweets o' public life, an' plan their little jobs,  
 An' suck the Treash'ry, (no gret harm, for it's ez dry ez cobs,)  
 An' go thru all the motions jest ez safe ez in a prison,  
 An' hev their business to themselves, while Buregard hez hisn :  
 Ez long 'z he gives the Hessians fits, committees can't make bother  
 'bout whether 't's done the legle way or whether 't's done the tother.  
 An' I tell you you've gut to larn thet War ain't one long teeter  
 Betwixt *I wan't* to an' *T wan't du*, debatin' like a skeetur  
 Afore he lights, — all is, to give the other side a millin',  
 An' arter thet 's done, th' ain't no resk but wut the lor'll be willin';  
 No metter wut the guv'ment is, ez nigh ez I can hit it,  
 A lickin's constitooshunal, pervidin' *We* don't git it.  
 Jeff don't stan' dilly-dallyin', afore he takes a fort,  
 (With no one in,) to git the leave o' the nex' Soopreme Court,



Nor don't want forty-'leven weeks o'  
jawin' an' expoundin',  
To prove a nigger hez a right to save  
him, ef he's drownin';  
Whereas ole Abe 'ud sink afore he'd  
let a darkie boost him,  
Ef Taney should n't come along an'  
hed n't interdooced him.  
It ain't your twenty millions thet'll  
ever block Jeff's game,  
But one Man thet wun't let 'em jog jest  
ez he's takin' aim :  
Your numbers they may strengthen ye  
or weaken ye, ez 't heppens  
They're willin' to be helpin' hands or  
wuss'n-nothin' cap'ns.

I've chose my side, an' 't ain't no odds  
ef I wuz drawed with magnets,  
Or ef I thought it prudenter to jine the  
nighes' bagnets ;  
I've made my ch'ice, an' ciphared out,  
from all I see an' heard,  
Th' ole Constitutooshun never 'd git her  
decks for action cleared,  
Long 'z you elect for Congressmen poor  
shots thet want to go  
Coz they can't seem to git their grub no  
otherways than so,  
An' let your bes' men stay to home coz  
they wun't show ez talkers,  
Nor can't be hired to fool ye an' sof-  
soap ye at a caucus, —  
Long 'z ye set by Rotashun more 'n ye  
do by folks's merits,  
Ez though experunce thriv by change o'  
sile, like corn an' kerrits, —  
Long 'z you allow a critter's " claims "  
coz, spite o' shoves an' tippins,  
He's kep' his private pan jest where 't  
would ketch mos' public drippins', —  
Long 'z A. 'll turn tu an' grin' B.'s exe,  
ef B. 'll help him grin' hisn,  
(An' thet's the main idee by which your  
leadin' men hev risen,) —  
Long 'z you let *ary* exe be groun', 'less  
't is to cut the weasan'  
O' sneaks thet dunno till they're told  
wut is an' wut ain't Treason, —  
Long 'z ye give out commissions to a lot  
o' peddlin' drones  
Thet trade in whiskey with their men  
an' skin 'em to their bones, —  
Long 'z ye sift out " safe " canderdates  
thet no one ain't afeard on  
Coz they're so thund'r'in' eminent for  
bein' never heard on,

An' hain't no record, ez it's called, for  
folks to pick a hole in,  
Ez ef it hurt a man to hev a body with  
a soul in,  
An' it wuz ostentashun to be showin'  
on 't about,  
When half his feller-citizens contrive to  
du without, —  
Long 'z you suppose your votes can turn  
biled kebbage into brain,  
An' ary man thet's pop'lar's fit to drive  
a lightnin'-train, —  
Long 'z you believe democracy means  
*I'm ez good ez you be,*  
An' that a feller from the ranks can't be  
a knave or booby, —  
Long 'z Congress seems purvided, like  
yer street-cars an' yer 'busses,  
With ollers room for jes' one more o'  
your spiled-in-bakin' cusses,  
Dough 'thout the emptins of a soul, an'  
yit with means about 'em  
(Like essence-peddlers\*) thet 'll make  
folks long to be without 'em,  
Jest heavy 'nough to turn a scale thet's  
doubtful the wrong way,  
An' make their nat'ral arsenal o' bein'  
nasty pay, —  
Long 'z them things last, (an' *I* don't  
see no gret signs of improvin',)  
I sha' n't up stakes, nor hardly yit, nor 't  
would n't pay for movin' ;  
For, 'fore you lick us, it 'll be the  
long'st day ever *you* see.  
Yourn, (ez I 'xpec' to be nex' spring,)  
B., MARKISS O' BIG BOOSY.

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No. IV.

A MESSAGE OF JEFF DAVIS IN  
SECRET SESSION.

*Conjecturally reported by H. BIGLOW.*

TO THE EDITORS OF THE ATLANTIC  
MONTHLY.

JAALAM, 10th March, 1862.

GENTLEMEN, — My leisure has been so  
entirely occupied with the hitherto fruit-  
less endeavour to decypher the Runick  
inscription whose fortunate discovery I  
mentioned in my last communication, that  
I have not found time to discuss, as I had

\* A rustic euphemism for the American vari-  
ety of the *Mephitis*. H. W.

intended, the great problem of what we are to do with slavery, — a topick on which the publick mind in this place is at present more than ever agitated. What my wishes and hopes are I need not say, but for safe conclusions I do not conceive that we are yet in possession of facts enough on which to bottom them with certainty. Acknowledging the hand of Providence, as I do, in all events, I am sometimes inclined to think that they are wiser than we, and am willing to wait till we have made this continent once more a place where freemen can live in security and honour, before assuming any further responsibility. This is the view taken by my neighbour Habakkuk Sloansure, Esq., the president of our bank, whose opinion in the practical affairs of life has great weight with me, as I have generally found it to be justified by the event, and whose counsel, had I followed it, would have saved me from an unfortunate investment of a considerable part of the painful economies of half a century in the Northwest-Passage Tunnel. After a somewhat animated discussion with this gentleman, a few days since, I expanded, on the *audi alteram partem* principle, something which he happened to say by way of illustration, into the following fable.

#### FESTINA LENTE.

Once on a time there was a pool  
Fringed all about with flag-leaves cool  
And spotted with cow-lilies garish,  
Of frogs and pouts the ancient parish.  
Alders the creaking redwings sink on,  
Tussocks that house blithe Bob o' Lincoln  
Hedged round the unassailed seclusion,  
Where muskrats piled their cells Carthusian ;  
And many a moss-embroidered log,  
The watering-place of summer frog,  
Slept and decayed with patient skill,  
As watering-places sometimes will.

Now in this Abbey of Theleme,  
Which realized the fairest dream  
That ever dozing bull-frog had,  
Sunned on a half-sunk lily-pad,  
There rose a party with a mission  
To mend the polliwogs' condition,  
Who notified the selectmen  
To call a meeting there and then.  
"Some kind of steps," they said, "are needed ;  
They don't come on so fast as we did :  
Let 's dock their tails ; if that don't make 'em  
Frogs by brevet, the Old One take 'em !  
That boy, that came the other day  
To dig some flag-root down this way,  
His jack-knife left, and 't is a sign  
That Heaven approves of our design :  
'T were wicked not to urge the step on,  
When Providence has sent the weapon."

Old croakers, deacons of the mire,  
That led the deep batrachian choir,

*Uk ! Uk ! Caronk !* with bass that might  
Have left Lablache's out of sight,  
Shook nobby heads, and said, "No go !  
You 'd better let 'em try to grow :  
Old Doctor Time is slow, but still  
He does know how to make a pill."

But vain was all their hoarsest bass,  
Their old experience out of place,  
And spite of croaking and entreating,  
The vote was carried in marsh-meeting.

"Lord knows," protest the polliwogs,  
"We're anxious to be grown-up frogs ;  
But don't push in to do the work  
Of Nature till she prove a shirk ;  
'T is not by jumps that she advances,  
But wins her way by circumstances :  
Pray, wait awhile, until you know  
We're so contrived as not to grow ;  
Let Nature take her own direction,  
And she 'll absorb our imperfection ;  
You might n't like 'em to appear with,  
But we must have the things to steer with."

"No," piped the party of reform,  
"All great results are ta'en by storm ;  
Fate holds her best gifts till we show  
We've strength to make her let them go ;  
The Providence that works in history,  
And seems to some folks such a mystery,  
Does not creep slowly on *incog.*,  
But moves by jumps, a mighty frog ;  
No more reject the Age's chrism,  
Your queues are an anachronism ;  
No more the Future's promise mock,  
But lay your tails upon the block,  
Thankful that we the means have voted  
To have you thus to frogs promoted."

The thing was done, the tails were cropped,  
And home each philotadpole hopped,  
In faith rewarded to exult,  
And wait the beautiful result.  
Too soon it came ; our pool, so long  
The theme of patriot bull-frog's song,  
Next day was reeking, fit to smother,  
With heads and tails that missed each other, —  
Here snoutless tails, there tailless snouts ;  
The only gainers were the pouts.

#### MORAL.

From lower to the higher next,  
Not to the top, is Nature's text ;  
And embryo Good, to reach full stature,  
Absorbs the Evil in its nature.

I think that nothing will ever give permanent peace and security to this continent but the extirpation of Slavery therefrom, and that the occasion is nigh ; but I would do nothing hastily or vindictively, nor presume to jog the elbow of Providence. No desperate measures for me till we are sure that all others are hopeless, — *flectere si nequeo SUPEROS, Acheronta movebo*. To make Emancipation a reform instead of a revolution is worth a little patience, that we may have the Border States first, and then the non-slaveholders

of the Cotton States, with us in principle, — a consummation that seems to be nearer than many imagine. *Fiat justitia, ruat cælum*, is not to be taken in a literal sense by statesmen, whose problem is to get justice done with as little jar as possible to existing order, which has at least so much of heaven in it that it is not chaos. Our first duty toward our enslaved brother is to educate him, whether he be white or black. The first need of the free black is to elevate himself according to the standard of this material generation. So soon as the Ethiopian goes in his chariot, he will find not only Apostles, but Chief Priests and Scribes and Pharisees willing to ride with him.

Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se  
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit.

I rejoice in the President's late Message, which at last proclaims the Government on the side of freedom, justice, and sound policy.

As I write, comes the news of our disaster at Hampton Roads. I do not understand the supineness which, after fair warning, leaves wood to an unequal conflict with iron. It is not enough merely to have the right on our side, if we stick to the old flint-lock of tradition. I have observed in my parochial experience (*haud ignarus mali*) that the Devil is prompt to adopt the latest inventions of destructive warfare, and may thus take even such a three-decker as Bishop Butler at an advantage. It is curious, that, as gunpowder made armour useless on shore, so armour is having its revenge by baffling its old enemy at sea, — and that, while gunpowder robbed land warfare of nearly all its picturesqueness to give even greater statefulness and sublimity to a sea-fight, armour bids fair to degrade the latter into a squabble between two iron-shelled turtles.

Yours, with esteem and respect,  
HOMER WILBUR, A. M.

P. S. — I had wellnigh forgotten to say that the object of this letter is to enclose a communication from the gifted pen of Mr. Biglow.

I SENT you a messige, my friends, t' other  
day,  
To tell you I'd nothin' pertickler to  
say:  
't wuz the day our new nation gut kin'  
o' stillborn,

So 't wuz my pleasant dooty t' acknowl-  
edge the corn,

An' I see clearly then, ef I did n't be-  
fore,

Thet the *augur* in inauguration means  
*bore*.

I need n't tell *you* thet my messige wuz  
written

To diffuse correc' notions in France an'  
Gret Britten,

An' agin to impress on the poppylar  
mind

The comfort an' wisdom o' goin' it  
blind, —

To say thet I did n't abate not a hooter  
O' my faith in a happy an' glorious  
futur',

Ez rich in each soshle an' p'litickle  
blessin'

Ez them thet we now hed the joy o'  
possessin',

With a people united, an' longin' to  
die

For wut *we* call their country, without  
askin' why,

An' all the gret things we concluded to  
slope for

Ez much within reach now ez ever — to  
hope for.

We 've gut all the ellerments, this very  
hour,

Thet make up a fus'-class, self-govern-  
in' power:

We 've a war, an' a debt, an' a flag; an'  
ef this

Ain't to be interpendunt, why, wut on  
airth is?

An' nothin' now hendes our takin' our  
station

Ez the freest, enlightenedest, civerlized  
nation,

Built up on our bran'-new politickle  
thesis

Thet a Gov'ment's fust right is to tumble  
to pieces, —

I say nothin' hendes our takin' our  
place

Ez the very fus'-best o' the whole human  
race,

A spittin' tobacker ez proud ez you  
please

On Victory's bes' carpets, or loafin' at  
ease

In the Tool'ries front-parlor, discussin'  
affairs

With our heels on the backs o' Napo-  
leon's new chairs,



An' princes a-mixin' our cocktails an' slings, —  
 Excep', wal, excep' jest a very few things,  
 Sech ez navies an' armies an' wherewith to pay,  
 An' gittin' our sogers to run t' other way,  
 An' not be too over-pertickler in tryin' To hunt up the very las' ditches to die in.

Ther' are critters so base thet they want it explained  
 Jes' wut is the totle amount thet we 've gained,  
 Ez ef we could maysure stupenjious events  
 By the low Yankee stan'ard o' dollars an' cents :  
 They seem to forgit, thet, sence last year revolved,  
 We 've succeeded in gittin' sceshed an' dissolved,  
 An' thet no one can't hope to git thru dissolootion  
 'thout some kin' o' strain on the best Constitootion.  
 Who asks for a prospec' more flettrin' an' bright,  
 When from here clean to Texas it 's all one free fight ?  
 Hain't we rescued from Seward the gret leadin' featur  
 Thet makes it wuth while to be reasonin' creaturs ?  
 Hain't we saved Habus Coppers, improved it in fact,  
 By suspendin' the Unionists 'stid o' the Act ?  
 Ain't the laws free to all ? Where on airth else d' ye see  
 Every freeman improvin' his own rope an' tree ?  
 Ain't our piety sech (in our speeches an' messiges)  
 Ez t' astonish ourselves in the bes'-composed pessiges,  
 An' to make folks thet knowed us in th' ole state o' things  
 Think convarson ez easy ez drinkin' gin-slings ?

It 's ne'ssary to take a good confident tone  
 With the public ; but here, jest amongst us, I own

Things look blacker 'n thunder. Ther' 's no use denyin'  
 We 're clean out o' money, an' 'most out o' lyin' ;  
 Two things a youngnation can't mennage without,  
 Ef she wants to look wal at her fust comin' out ;  
 For the fust supplies physickle strength, while the second  
 Gives a morril edvantage thet 's hard to be reckoned :  
 For this latter I 'm willin' to du wut I can ;  
 For the former you 'll hev to consult on a plan, —  
 Though our *fust* want (an' this pint I want your best views on)  
 Is plausible paper to print I. O. U. s on. Some gennlemen think it would cure all our cankers  
 In the way o' finance, ef we jes' hanged the bankers ;  
 An' I own the proposle 'ud square with my views,  
 Ef their lives wuz n't all thet we 'd left 'em to lose.  
 Some say thet more confidence might be inspired,  
 Ef we voted our cities an' towns to be fired, —  
 A plan thet 'ud suttently tax our endurance,  
 Coz't would be our own bills we should git for th' insurance ;  
 But cinders, no metter how sacred we think 'em,  
 Might n't strike furrin minds ez good sources of income,  
 Nor the people, perhaps, would n't like the eclaw  
 O' bein' all turned into paytriots by law.  
 Some want we should buy all the cotton an' burn it,  
 On a pledge, when we 've gut thru the war, to return it, —  
 Then to take the proceeds an' hold *them* ez security  
 For an issue o' bonds to be met at maturity  
 With an issue o' notes to be paid in hard cash  
 On the fus' Monday follerin' the 'tarnal Allsmash :  
 This hez a safe air, an', once hold o' the gold,

'nd leave our vile plunderers out in the cold,  
 An' *might* temp' John Bull, ef it warn't for the dip he  
 Once gut from the banks o' my own Mississippi.  
 Some think we could make, by arrangin' the figgers,  
 A hendy home-currency out of our niggers;  
 But it wun't du to lean much on ary sech staff,  
 For they're gittin' tu current a'ready, by half.

One gennleman says, ef we lef' our loan out  
 Where Floyd could git hold on't *he*'d take it, no doubt;  
 But 't ain't jes' the takin, though 't hez a good look,  
 We mus' git sunthin' out on it arter it's took,  
 An' we need now more'n ever, with sorer I own,  
 Thet some one another should let us a loan,  
 Sence a soger wun't fight, on'y jes' while he draws his  
 Pay down on the nail, for the best of all causes,  
 'thout askin' to know wut the quarrel's about, —  
 An' once come to thet, why, our game is played out.  
 It's ez true ez though I should n't never hev said it,  
 Thet a hitch hez took place in our system o' credit;  
 I swear it's all right in my speeches an' messiges,  
 But ther' 's idees afloat, ez ther' is about sessiges:  
 Folks wun't take a bond ez a basis to trade on,  
 Without nosin' round to find out wut it's made on,  
 An' the thought more an' more thru the public min' crosses  
 Thet our Treshry hez gut 'mos' too many dead hosses.  
 Wut 's called credit, you see, is some like a balloon,  
 Thet looks while it's up 'most ez harnsome 'z a moon,  
 But once git a leak in 't an' wut looked so grand

Caves righ' down in a jiffy ez flat ez your hand.  
 Now the world is a drefle mean place, for our sins,  
 Where ther' ollus is critters about with long pins  
 A-prickin' the bubbles we've blowed with sech care,  
 An' provin' ther' 's nothin' inside but bad air:  
 They're all Stuart Millses, peor-white trash, an' sneaks,  
 Without no more chivverly 'n Choctaws or Creeks,  
 Who think a real gennleman's promise to pay  
 Is meant to be took in trade's ornery way:  
 Them fellers an' I could n' never agree;  
 They're the nateral foes o' the Southun Idee;  
 I'd gladly take all of our other resks on me  
 To be red o' this low-lived politikle 'con'my!

Now a dastardly notion is gittin' about  
 Thet our bladder is bust an' the gas oozin' out,  
 An' unless we can mennage in some way to stop it,  
 Why, the thing's a gone coon, an' we might ez wal drop it.  
 Brag works wal at fust, but it ain't jes' the thing  
 For a stiddy inves'ment the shiners to bring,  
 An' votin' we're prosp'rous a hundred times over  
 Wun't change bein' starved into livin' on clover.  
 Manassas done sunthin' tow'rds drawin' the wool  
 O'er the green, antislavery eyes o' John Bull:  
 Oh, *warn't* it a godsend, jes' when sech tight fixes  
 Wuz crowdin' us mourners, to throw double-sixes!  
 I wuz tempted to think, an' it wuz n't no wonder,  
 Ther' wuz reelly a Providence, — over or under, —  
 When, all packed for Nashville, I fust ascertained  
 From the papers up North wut a victory we'd gained.

't wuz the time for diffusin' correc' views  
abroad

Of our union an' strength an' relyin' on  
God ;

An', fact, when I'd gut thru my fust  
big surprise,

I much ez half b'lieved in my own tall-  
est lies,

An' conveyed the idee thet the whole  
Southun popperlace

Wuz Spartans all on the keen jump for  
Thermopperlies,

Thet set on the Lincolnites' bombs till  
they bust,

An' fight for the priv'lege o' dyin' the  
fust ;

But Roanoke, Bufort, Millspring, an' the  
rest

Of our recent starn-foremost successes  
out West,

Hain't left us a foot for our swellin' to  
stand on, —

We've showed *too* much o' wut Buregard  
calls *abandon*,

For all our Thermopperlies (an' it's a  
marcy

We hain't hed no more) hev ben clean  
vicy-varsy,

An' wut Spartans wuz lef when the bat-  
tle wuz done

Wuz them thet wuz too unambitious to  
run.

Oh, ef we hed on'y jes' gut Reecognition,  
Things now would ha' ben in a different  
position !

You 'd ha' hed all you wanted : the  
paper blockade

Smashed up into toothpicks ; unlim-  
ited trade

In the one thing thet's needfle, till nig-  
gers, I swow,

Hed ben thicker 'n provisional shin-  
plasters now ;

Quinine by the ton 'ginst the shakes  
when they seize ye ;

Nice paper to coin into C. S. A. specie ;  
The voice of the driver 'd be heard in our  
land,

An' the univarse scringe, ef we lifted our  
hand :

Would n't *thet* be some like a fulfillin' the  
prophecies,

With all the fus' fem'lies in all the fust  
offices ?

't wuz a beautiful dream, an' all sorer  
is idle, —

But *ef* Lincoln *would* ha' hanged Mason  
an' Slidell !

For would n't the Yankees hev found  
they 'd ketched Tartars,

Ef they 'd raised two sech critters as  
them into martyrs ?

Mason *wuz* F. F. V., though a cheap  
card to win on,

But t' other was jes' New York trash to  
begin on ;

They ain't o' no good in Européan pel-  
lices,

But think wut a help they 'd ha' ben on  
their allowesses !

They 'd ha' felt they wuz truly fulfillin'  
their mission,

An', oh, how dog-cheap we 'd ha' gut  
Reecognition !

But somehow another, wutever we've  
tried,

Though the the'ry 's fust-rate, the facts  
*wun't* coincide :

Facts are contrary 'z mules, an' ez hard  
in the mouth,

An' they allus hev showed a mean spite  
to the South.

Sech bein' the case, we hed best look  
about

For some kin' o' way to slip *our* necks  
out :

Le' 's vote our las' dollar, ef one can be  
found,

(An', at any rate, votin' it hez a good  
sound,) —

Le' 's swear thet to arms all our people  
is flyin',

(The critters can't read, an' wun't know  
how we 're lyin',) —

Thet Toombs is advancin' to sack Cin-  
cinnater,

With a rovin' commission to pillage an'  
slahter, —

Thet we've throwed to the winds all re-  
gard for wut 's lawfle,

An' gone in for sunthin' promiscu'sly  
awfle.

Ye see, hitherto, it's our own knaves  
an' fools

Thet we've used, (those for whetstones,  
an' t' others ez tools,)

An' now our las' chance is in puttin' to  
test

The same kin' o' cattle up North an' out  
West, —

Your Belmonts, Vallandighams, Woods-  
es, an' sech,



Poor shotes that ye could n't persuade  
us to tech,  
Not in ornery times, though we're will-  
in' to feed 'em  
With a nod now an' then, when we hap-  
pen to need 'em;  
Why, for my part, I'd ruther shake  
hands with a nigger  
Than with cusses that load an' don't  
darst dror a trigger;  
They're the wust wooden nutmegs the  
Yankees produce,  
Shaky everywheres else, an' jes' sound  
on the goose;  
They ain't wuth a cuss, an' I set noth-  
in' by 'em,  
But we're in sech a fix thet I s'pose we  
mus' try 'em.  
I — But, Gennlemen, here's a de-  
spatch jes' come in  
Which shows that the tide's begun turn-  
in' agin', —  
Gret Cornfedrit success! C'lumbus  
eevacoated!  
I mus' run down an' hev the thing prop-  
erly stated,  
An' show wut a triumph it is, an' how  
lucky  
To fin'ly git red o' thet cussed Ken-  
tucky, —  
An' how, sence Fort Donelson, winnin'  
the day  
Consists in triumphantly gittin' away.

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No. V.

SPEECH OF HONOURABLE PRE-  
SERVED DOE IN SECRET CAU-  
CUS.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE ATLANTIC  
MONTHLY.

JAALAM, 12th April, 1862.

GENTLEMEN, — As I cannot but hope that the ultimate, if not speedy, success of the national arms is now sufficiently ascertained, sure as I am of the righteousness of our cause and its consequent claim on the blessing of God, (for I would not show a faith inferior to that of the Pagan historian with his *Facile evenit quod Dis cordi est*,) it seems to me a suitable occasion to withdraw our minds a moment from the confusing din of battle to objects of peaceful and permanent interest. Let us not

neglect the monuments of preterite history because what shall be history is so diligently making under our eyes. *Cras ingens iterabimus æquor*; to-morrow will be time enough for that stormy sea; to-day let me engage the attention of your readers with the Runick inscription to whose fortunate discovery I have heretofore alluded. Well may we say with the poet, *Multa renascuntur quæ jam cecidere*. And I would premise, that, although I can no longer resist the evidence of my own senses from the stone before me to the ante-Columbian discovery of this continent by the Northmen, *gens inclytissima*, as they are called in a Palermitan inscription, written fortunately in a less debatable character than that which I am about to decipher, yet I would by no means be understood as wishing to vilipend the merits of the great Genoese, whose name will never be forgotten so long as the inspiring strains of "Hail Columbia" shall continue to be heard. Though he must be stripped also of whatever praise may belong to the experiment of the egg, which I find proverbially attributed by Castilian authors to a certain Juanito or Jack, (perhaps an offshoot of our giant-killing mythus,) his name will still remain one of the most illustrious of modern times. But the impartial historian owes a duty likewise to obscure merit, and my solicitude to render a tardy justice is perhaps quickened by my having known those who, had their own field of labour been less secluded, might have found a readier acceptance with the reading public. I could give an example, but I forbear: *forsitan nostris ex ossibus oritur ultor*.

Touching Runick inscriptions, I find that they may be classed under three general heads: 1°. Those which are understood by the Danish Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, and Professor Rafn, their Secretary; 2°. Those which are comprehensible only by Mr. Rafn; and 3°. Those which neither the Society, Mr. Rafn, nor anybody else can be said in any definite sense to understand, and which accordingly offer peculiar temptations to enucleating sagacity. These last are naturally deemed the most valuable by intelligent antiquaries, and to this class the stone now in my possession fortunately belongs. Such give a picturesque variety to ancient events, because susceptible oftentimes of as many interpretations as there are individual archeologists; and since facts are only the pulp in which the Idea or event-seed is softly imbedded till it ripen, it is of little consequence what colour or flavour we attribute to them, provided it be

agreeable. Availing myself of the obliging assistance of Mr. Arphaxad Bowers, an ingenious photographick artist, whose house-on-wheels has now stood for three years on our Meeting-House Green, with the somewhat contradictory inscription, — “*our motto is onward*,” — I have sent accurate copies of my treasure to many learned men and societies, both native and European. I may hereafter communicate their different and (*me jndice*) equally erroneous solutions. I solicit also, Messrs. Editors, your own acceptance of the copy herewith enclosed. I need only premise further, that the stone itself is a goodly block of metamorphick sandstone, and that the Runes resemble very nearly the ornithichnites or fossil bird-tracks of Dr. Hitchcock, but with less regularity or apparent design than is displayed by those remarkable geological monuments. These are rather the *non bene junctarum discordia semina rerum*. Resolved to leave no door open to cavil, I first of all attempted the elucidation of this remarkable example of lithick literature by the ordinary modes, but with no adequate return for my labour. I then considered myself amply justified in resorting to that heroic treatment the felicity of which, as applied by the great Bentley to Milton, had long ago enlisted my admiration. Indeed, I had already made up my mind, that, in case good fortune should throw any such invaluable record in my way, I would proceed with it in the following simple and satisfactory method. After a cursory examination, merely sufficing for an approximative estimate of its length, I would write down a hypothetical inscription based upon antecedent probabilities, and then proceed to extract from the characters engraven on the stone a meaning as nearly as possible conformed to this *a priori* product of my own ingenuity. The result more than justified my hopes, inasmuch as the two inscriptions were made without any great violence to tally in all essential particulars. I then proceeded, not without some anxiety, to my second test, which was, to read the Runick letters diagonally, and again with the same success. With an excitement pardonable under the circumstances, yet tempered with thankful humility, I now applied my last and severest trial, my *experimentum crucis*. I turned the stone, now doubly precious in my eyes, with scrupulous exactness upside down. The physical exertion so far displaced my spectacles as to derange for a moment the focus of vision. I confess that it was with some tremulousness that I readjusted them upon my nose,

and prepared my mind to bear with calmness any disappointment that might ensue. But, *O albo dies notanda lapillo!* what was my delight to find that the change of position had effected none in the sense of the writing, even by so much as a single letter! I was now, and justly, as I think, satisfied of the conscientious exactness of my interpretation. It is as follows: —

HERE

BJARNA GRIMOLFFSSON  
FIRST DRANK CLOUD-BROTHER  
THROUGH CHILD-OF-LAND-AND-  
WATER:

that is, drew smoke through a reed stem. In other words, we have here a record of the first smoking of the herb *Nicotiana Tabacum* by an European on this continent. The probable results of this discovery are so vast as to baffle conjecture. If it be objected, that the smoking of a pipe would hardly justify the setting up of a memorial stone, I answer, that even now the Moquis Indian, ere he takes his first whiff, bows reverently toward the four quarters of the sky in succession, and that the loftiest monuments have been reared to perpetuate fame, which is the dream of the shadow of smoke. The *Saga*, it will be remembered, leaves this Bjarna to a fate something like that of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, on board a sinking ship in the “wormy sea,” having generously given up his place in the boat to a certain Icelander. It is doubly pleasant, therefore, to meet with this proof that the brave old man arrived safely in Vinland, and that his declining years were cheered by the respectful attentions of the dusky denizens of our then uninhabited forests. Most of all was I gratified, however, in thus linking forever the name of my native town with one of the most momentous occurrences of modern times. Hitherto Jaalam, though in soil, climate, and geographical position as highly qualified to be the theatre of remarkable historical incidents as any spot on the earth’s surface, has been, if I may say it without seeming to question the wisdom of Providence, almost maliciously neglected, as it might appear, by occurrences of world-wide interest in want of a situation. And in matters of this nature it must be confessed that adequate events are as necessary as the *vates sacer* to record them. Jaalam stood always modestly ready, but circumstances made no fitting response to her generous intentions. Now, however, she

assumes her place on the historick roll. I have hitherto been a zealous opponent of the Circean herb, but I shall now re-examine the question without bias.

I am aware that the Rev. Jonas Tutchel, in a recent communication to the Bogus Four Corners Weekly Meridian, has endeavored to show that this is the sepulchral inscription of Thorwald Eriksson, who, as is well known, was slain in Vinland by the natives. But I think he has been misled by a preconceived theory, and cannot but feel that he has thus made an ungracious return for my allowing him to inspect the stone with the aid of my own glasses (he having by accident left his at home) and in my own study. The heathen ancients might have instructed this Christian minister in the rites of hospitality; but much is to be pardoned to the spirit of self-love. He must indeed be ingenious who can make out the words *hær hvílir* from any characters in the inscription in question, which, whatever else it may be, is certainly not mortuary. And even should the reverend gentleman succeed in persuading some fantastical wits of the soundness of his views, I do not see what useful end he will have gained. For if the English Courts of Law hold the testimony of grave-stones from the burial-grounds of Protestant dissenters to be questionable, even where it is essential in proving a descent, I cannot conceive that the epitaphial assertions of heathens should be esteemed of more authority by any man of orthodox sentiments.

At this moment, happening to cast my eyes upon the stone, whose characters a transverse light from my southern window brings out with singular distinctness, another interpretation has occurred to me, promising even more interesting results. I hasten to close my letter in order to follow at once the clew thus providentially suggested.

I inclose, as usual, a contribution from Mr. Biglow, and remain,  
Gentlemen, with esteem and respect,  
Your Obedient Humble Servant,  
HOMER WILBUR, A. M.

I THANK ye, my friends, for the warmth o' your greetin':  
Ther' 's few airthly blessins but wut 's vain an' fleetin';  
But ef ther' is one that hain't *no* cracks an' flaws,  
An' is wuth goin' in for, it's pop'lar applause;

It sends up the sperits ez lively ez rockets,

An' I feel it — wal, down to the eend o' my pockets.

Jes' lovin' the people is Canaan in view.

But it's Canaan paid quarterly t' hev 'em love you;

It's a blessin' thet 's breakin' out ollus in fresh spots;

It's a-follerin' Moses 'thout losin' the flesh-pots.

But, Gennlemen, 'scuse me, I ain't sech a raw cun

Ez to go luggin' ellerkence into a caucus, —

Thet is, into one where t'ue call comprehends

Nut the People in person, but on'y their friends;

I 'm so kin' o' used to convincin' the masses

Of th' edvantage o' bein' self-governin' asses,

I forgut thet *we* 're all o' the sort thet pull wires

An' arrange for the public their wants an' desires,

An' thet wut we hed met for wuz jes' to agree

Wut the People's opinions in futur' should be.

Now, to come to the nub, we've ben all disappointed,

An' our leadin' idees are a kind o' disjinted, —

Though, fur ez the nateral man could discern,

Things ough' to ha' took most an opper-site turn.

But Ther'y is jes' like a train on the rail,

Thet, weather or no, puts her thru without fail,

While Fac' 's the ole stage thet gits sloughed in the ruts,

An' hez to allow for your darned efs an' buts,

An' so, nut intendin' no pers'nal reflections,

They don't — don't nut allus, thet is, — make connections:

Sometimes, when it really doos seem thet they 'd oughter

Combine jest ez kindly ez new rum an' water,



Both 'll be jest ez sot in their ways ez a  
bagnet,  
Ez otherwise-minded ez th' eends of a  
magnet,  
An' folks like you 'n' me, thet ain't ept  
to be sold,  
Git somehow or 'nother left out in the  
cold.

I expected 'fore this, 'thout no gret of a  
row,  
Jeff D. would ha' ben where A. Lincoln  
is now,  
With Taney to say 't wuz all legle an'  
fair,  
An' a jury o' Deemocrats ready to  
swear  
Thet the ingin o' State gut throwed into  
the ditch  
By the fault o' the North in misplacin'  
the switch.  
Things wuz ripenin' fust-rate with  
Buchanan to nuss 'em;  
But the People they would n't be Mex-  
icans, cuss 'em!  
Ain't the safeguards o' freedom upsot, 'z  
you may say,  
Ef the right o' rev'lution is took clean  
away?  
An' doos n't the right primy-fashy in-  
clude  
The bein' entiteld to nut be sub-  
dued?  
The fact is, we 'd gone for the Union so  
strong,  
When Union meant South ollus right  
an' North wrong,  
Thet the people gut fooled into thinkin'  
it might  
Worry on middlin' wal with the North  
in the right.  
We might ha' ben now jest ez prosp'rous  
ez France,  
Where p'litikle enterprise hez a fair  
chance,  
An' the people is heppy an' proud et this  
hour,  
Long ez they hev the votes, to let Nap  
hev the power;  
But *our* folks they went an' believed  
wut we 'd told 'em,  
An', the flag once insulted, no mortle  
could hold 'em.  
'T wuz pervokin' jest when we wuz cer-  
t'in to win,—  
An' I, for one, wun't trust the masses  
agin :

For a people thet knows much ain't fit  
to be free  
In the self-cockin', back-action style o'  
J. D.

I can't believe now but wut half on 't is  
lies;  
For who 'd thought the North wuz a-  
goin' to rise,  
Or take the pervokin'est kin' of a  
stump,  
'thout 't wuz sunthin' ez pressin' ez  
Gabr'el's las' trump?  
Or who 'd ha' supposed, arter *sech* swell  
an' bluster  
'bout the lick-ary-ten-on-ye fighters  
they 'd muster,  
Raised by hand on briled lightnin', ez  
op'lent 'z you please  
In a primitive furrest o' femmily-trees,—  
Who 'd ha' thought thet them South-  
uners ever 'ud show  
Starns with pedigrees to 'em like theirn  
to the foe,  
Or, when the vamosin' come, ever to  
find  
Nat'ral masters in front an' mean white  
folks behind?  
By ginger, ef I 'd ha' known half I know  
now,  
When I wuz to Congress, I would n't, I  
swow,  
Hev let 'em cair on so high-minded an'  
sarsy,  
'thout *some* show o' wut you may call  
vicy-varsy.  
To be sure, we wuz under a contrac' jes'  
then  
To be drefle forbearin' towards Southun  
men;  
We hed to go sheers in preservin' the  
bellance:  
An' ez they seemed to feel they wuz  
wastin' their tellents  
'thout some un to kick, 't warn't more  
'n proper, you know,  
Each should funnish his part; an' sence  
they found the toe,  
An' we wuz n't cherubs—wal, we found  
the buffer,  
For fear thet the Compromise System  
should suffer.

I wun't say the plan hed n't onpleasant  
featur, —  
For men are perverse an' onreasonin'  
creatur,

An' forgit thet in this life 't ain't likely  
 to heppen  
 Their own privit fancy should ollas be  
 cappen,—  
 But it worked jest ez smooth ez the key  
 of a safe,  
 An' the gret Union bearins played free  
 from all chafe.  
 They warn't hard to suit, ef they hed  
 their own way,  
 An' we (thet is, some on us) made the  
 thing pay :  
 't wuz a fair give-an'-take out of Uncle  
 Sam's heap ;  
 Ef they took wut warn't theirn, wut we  
 give come ez cheap ;  
 The elect gut the offices down to tide-  
 waiter,  
 The people took skinnin' ez mild ez a  
 tater,  
 Seemed to choose who they wanted tu,  
 footed the bills,  
 An' felt kind o' 'z though they wuz  
 havin' their wills,  
 Which kep' 'em ez harmless an' cherfle  
 ez crickets,  
 While all we invested wuz names on the  
 tickets :  
 Wal, ther' 's nothin', for folks fond o'  
 lib'ral consumption  
 Free o' charge, like democ'acy tempered  
 with gumption !  
 Now warn't thet a system wuth pains in  
 presarvin',  
 Where the people found jints an' their  
 frien's done the carvin',—  
 Where the many done all o' their think-  
 in' by proxy,  
 An' were proud on 't ez lon' ez 't wuz  
 christened Democ'cy,—  
 Where the few let us sap all o' Freedom's  
 foundations,  
 Ef you call it reformin' with prudence  
 an' patience,  
 An' were willin' Jeff's snake-egg should  
 hetch with the rest,  
 Ef you writ "Constitootional" over the  
 nest ?  
 But it's all out o' kilter, ('t wuz too good  
 to last,)  
 An' all jes' by J. D.'s perceedin' too  
 fast ;  
 Ef he 'd on'y hung on for a month or  
 two more,  
 We 'd ha' gut things fixed nicer 'n they  
 hed ben before :

Afore he drew off an' lef all in confu-  
 sion,  
 We wuz safely entrenched in the ole  
 Constitootion,  
 With an outlyin', heavy-gun, casemated  
 fort  
 To rake all assailants,— I mean th' S. J.  
 Court.  
 Now I never 'll acknowledge (nut ef you  
 should skin me)  
 't wuz wise to abandon sech works to the  
 in'my,  
 An' let him fin' out thet wut scared him  
 so long,  
 Our whole line of argyments, lookin' so  
 strong,  
 All our Scriptur an' law, every the'ry  
 an' fac',  
 Wuz Quaker-guns daubed with Pro-  
 slavery black.  
 Why, ef the Republicans ever should  
 git  
 Andy Johnson or some one to lend 'em  
 the wit  
 An' the spunk jes' to mount Constitoo-  
 tion an' Court  
 With Columbiad guns, your real ekle-  
 rights sort,  
 Or drill out the spike from the ole Dec-  
 laration  
 Thet can Kerry a solid shot clearn roun'  
 creation,  
 We 'd better take maysures for shettin'  
 up shop,  
 An' put off our stock by a vendoo or  
 swop.  
 But they wun't never dare tu ; you 'll  
 see 'em in Edom  
 'fore they ventur' to go where their doc-  
 trines 'ud lead 'em :  
 They 've ben takin' our princerples up ez  
 we dropt 'em,  
 An' thought it wuz terrible 'cute to  
 adopt 'em ;  
 But they 'll fin' out 'fore long thet their  
 hope 's ben deceivin' 'em,  
 An' thet princerples ain't o' no good, ef  
 you b'lieve in 'em ;  
 It makes 'em tu stiff for a party to  
 use,  
 Where they 'd ough' to be easy 'z an ole  
 pair o' shoes.  
 If we say 'n our pletform thet all men  
 are brothers,  
 We don't mean thet some folks ain't  
 more so 'n some others ;

An' it 's wal understood that we make a  
 selection,  
 An' ther brotherhood kin' o' subsides  
 arter 'lection.  
 The fust thing for sound politicians to  
 larn is,  
 Thet Truth, to dror kindly in all sorts  
 o' harness,  
 Mus' be kep' in the abstract, — for, come  
 to apply it,  
 You 're ept to hurt some folks's interists  
 by it.  
 Wal, these 'ere Republicans (some on  
 'em) ects  
 Ez though general mexime 'ud suit  
 speshle facts ;  
 An' there 's where we 'll nick 'em, there 's  
 where they 'll be lost :  
 For applyin' your princerple 's wut makes  
 it cost,  
 An' folks don't want Fourth o' July t'  
 interfere  
 With the business-consarns o' the rest o'  
 the year,  
 No more 'n they want Sunday to pry an'  
 to peek  
 Into wut they are doin' the rest o' the  
 week.  
 A ginooine statesman should be on his  
 guard,  
 Ef he *must* hev beliefs, nut to b'lieve 'em  
 tu hard ;  
 For, ez sure ez he does, he 'll be blartin'  
 'em out  
 'thout regardin' the natur' o' man more  
 'n a spout,  
 Nor it don't ask much gumption to pick  
 out a flaw  
 In a party whose leaders are loose in the  
 jaw :  
 An' so in our own case I ventur' to  
 hint  
 Thet we'd better nut air our perceedin's  
 in print,  
 Nor pass resserlootions ez long ez your  
 arm  
 Thet may, ez things heppen to turn, do  
 us harm ;  
 For when you 've done all your real  
 meanin' to smother,  
 The darned things 'll up an' mean sun-  
 thin' or 'nother.  
 Jeff'son prob'ly meant wal with his "born  
 free an' ekle,"  
 But it 's turned out a real crooked stick  
 in the sekle ;

It 's taken full eighty-odd year—don't  
 you see?—  
 From the pop'lar belief to root out thet  
 idee,  
 An', arter all, suckers on 't keep buddin'  
 forth  
 In the nat'lly onprincipled mind o' the  
 North.  
 No, never say nothin' without you 're  
 compelled tu,  
 An' then don't say nothin' that you can  
 be held tu,  
 Nor don't leave no friction-idees layin'  
 loose  
 For the ign'ant to put to incend'ary  
 use.  
 You know I 'm a feller that keeps a  
 skinned eye  
 On the leetle events that go skurryin'  
 by,  
 Coz it 's of'ner by them than by gret  
 ones you 'll see  
 Wut the p'litickle weather is likely to  
 be.  
 Now I don't think the South 's more 'n  
 begun to be licked,  
 But I *du* think, ez Jeff says, the wind-  
 bag 's gut pricked ;  
 It 'll blow for a spell an' keep puffin' an'  
 wheezin',  
 The tighter our army an' navy keep  
 squeezezin', —  
 For their can't help spread-eaglein' long  
 'z ther' 's a mouth  
 To blow Enfield's Speaker thru lef' at  
 the South.  
 But it 's high time for us to be settin'  
 our faces  
 Towards reconstructin' the national ba-  
 sis,  
 With an eye to beginnin' agin on the  
 jolly ticks  
 We used to chalk up 'hind the back-door  
 o' politics ;  
 An' the fus' thing 's to save wut of  
 Slav'ry ther' 's lef'  
 Arter this (I mus' call it) imprudence o'  
 Jeff :  
 For a real good Abuse, with its roots fur  
 an' wide,  
 Is the kin' o' thing I like to hev on my  
 side ;  
 A Scriptor' name makes it ez sweet ez a  
 rose,  
 An' it 's tougher the older an' uglier it  
 grows —



(I ain't speakin' now o' the righteous-ness of it,  
But the p'litickle purchase it gives an' the profit).

Things look pooty squally, it must be allowed,

An' I don't see much signs of a bow in the cloud :

Ther' 's too many Deemocrats — leaders wut 's wuss —

That go for the Union 'thout carin' a cuss

Ef it helps ary party thet ever wuz heard on,

So our eagle ain't made a split Austrian bird on.

But ther' 's still some consarvative signs to be found

That shows the gret heart o' the People is sound :

(Excuse me for usin' a stump-phrase agin,

But, once in the way on 't, they *will* stick like sin :)

There 's Phillips, for instance, hez jes' ketched a Tartar

In the Law-'n'-Order Party of ole Cincinnati ;

An' the Compromise System ain't gone out o' reach,

Long 'z you keep the right limits on freedom o' speech.

'T warn't none too late, neither, to put on the gag,

For he 's dangerous now he goes in for the flag.

Nut thet I altogether approve o' bad eggs,

They 're mos' gin'ly argymunt on its las' legs, —

An' their logic is ept to be tu indiscriminate,

Nor don't ollus wait the right objects to 'liminate ;

But there is a variety on 'em, you 'll find,

Jest ez usefle an' more, besides bein' refined, —

I mean o' the sort thet are laid by the dictionary,

Sech ez sophisms an' cant, thet 'll kerry conviction ary

Way thet you want to the right class o' men,

An' are staler than all 't ever come from a hen :

“Disunion” done wal till our resh Southun friends

Took the savor all out on 't for national ends ;

But I guess “Abolition” 'll work a spell yit,

When the war 's done, an' so will “For-give-an'-forgit.”

Times mus' be pooty thoroughly out o' all jint,

Ef we can't make a good constitootional pint ;

An' the good time 'll come to be grindin' our exes,

When the war goes to seed in the nettle o' texes :

Ef Jbn'than don't squirm, with sech helps to assist him,

I give up my faith in the free-suffrage system ;

Democ'cy wun't be nut a mite interestin' ;

Nor p'litickle capital much wuth investin' ;

An' my notion is, to keep dark an' lay low

Till we see the right minute to put in our blow. —

But I 've talked longer now 'n I hed any idee,

An' ther' 's others you want to hear more 'n you du me ;

So I 'll set down an' give thet 'ere bottle a skrimmage,

For I 've spoke till I 'm dry ez a real graven image.

NO. VI.

### SUNTHIN' IN THE PASTORAL LINE.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

JAALAM, 17th May, 1862.

GENTLEMEN. — At the special request of Mr. Biglow, I intended to inclose, together with his own contribution, (into which, at my suggestion, he has thrown a little more of pastoral sentiment than usual,) some passages from my sermon on the day of the National Fast, from the text, “Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them,” *Heb. xiii. 3.* But I have not

leisure sufficient at present for the copying of them, even were I altogether satisfied with the production as it stands. I should prefer, I confess, to contribute the entire discourse to the pages of your respectable miscellany, if it should be found acceptable upon perusal, especially as I find the difficulty in selection of greater magnitude than I had anticipated. What passes without challenge in the fervour of oral delivery, cannot always stand the colder criticism of the closet. I am not so great an enemy of Eloquence as my friend Mr. Biglow would appear to be from some passages in his contribution for the current month. I would not, indeed, hastily suspect him of covertly glancing at myself in his somewhat caustick animadversions, albeit some of the phrases he girds at are not entire strangers to my lips. I am a more hearty admirer of the Puritans than seems now to be the fashion, and believe, that, if they Hebraized a little too much in their speech, they showed remarkable practical sagacity as statesmen and founders. But such phenomena as Puritanism are the results rather of great religious than of merely social convulsions, and do not long survive them. So soon as an earnest conviction has cooled into a phrase, its work is over, and the best that can be done with it is to bury it. *Ite, missa est.* I am inclined to agree with Mr. Biglow that we cannot settle the great political questions which are now presenting themselves to the nation by the opinions of Jeremiah or Ezekiel as to the wants and duties of the Jews in their time, nor do I believe that an entire community with their feelings and views would be practicable or even agreeable at the present day. At the same time I could wish that their habit of subordinating the actual to the moral, the flesh to the spirit, and this world to the other, were more common. They had found out, at least, the great military secret that soul weighs more than body. — But I am suddenly called to a sick-bed in the household of a valued parishioner.

With esteem and respect,  
Your obedient servant,  
HOMER WILBUR.

Once git a smell o' musk into a draw,  
An' it clings hold like precer dents in  
law :  
Your gra'ma'am put it there, — when,  
goodness knows, —  
To jes' this-worldify her Sunday-clo'es ;

But the old chist wun't sarve her gran'  
son's wife,  
(For, 'thout new funnitoo, wut good in  
life ?)  
An' so ole clawfoot, from the precinks  
dread  
O' the spare chamber, slinks into the  
shed,  
Where, dim with dust, it fust or last  
subsides  
To holdin' seeds an' fifty things besides ;  
But better days stick fast in heart an'  
husk,  
An' all you keep in 't gits a scent o'  
musk.

Jes' so with poets : wut they 've airly read  
Gits kind o' worked into their heart an'  
head,  
So 's 't they can't seem to write but jest  
on sheers  
With furrin countries or played-out  
ideers,  
Nor hev a feelin', ef it doos n't smack  
O' wut some critter chose to feel 'way  
back :  
This makes 'em talk o' daisies, larks, an'  
things,  
Ez though we 'd nothin' here that blows  
an' sings, —  
(Why, I 'd give more for one live bobo-  
link  
Than a square mile o' larks in printer's  
ink,) —  
This makes 'em think our fust o' May is  
May,  
Which 't ain't, for all the almanicks can  
say.

O little city-gals, don't never go it  
Blind on the word o' noospaper or poet !  
They're apt to puff, an' May-day sel-  
dom looks  
Up in the country ez it doos in books ;  
They're no more like than hornets'-  
nests an' hives,  
Or printed sarmons be to holy lives.  
I, with my trousers perched on cowhide  
boots,  
Tuggin' my foundered feet out by the  
roots,  
Hev seen ye come to fling on April's  
hearse  
Your muslin nose-gays from the mil-  
liner's,  
Puzzlin' to find dry ground your queen  
to choose,

An' dance your throats sore in morocker  
 shoes :  
 I've seen ye an' felt proud, thet, come  
 wut would,  
 Our Pilgrim stock wuz pethed with  
 hardihood.  
 Pleasure doos make us Yankees kind o'  
 winch,  
 Ez though 't wuz sunthin' paid for by  
 the inch ;  
 But yit we du contrive to worry thru,  
 Ef Dooty tells us thet the thing's to du,  
 An' kerry a hollerday, ef we set out,  
 Ez stiddily ez though 't wuz a redoubt.

I, country-born an' bred, know where to  
 find  
 Some blooms thet make the season suit  
 the mind,  
 An' seem to metch the doubtin' blue-  
 bird's notes, —  
 Half-vent'rin' liverworts in furry coats,  
 Bloodroots, whose rolled-up leaves ef  
 you oncurl,  
 Each on 'em 's cradle to a baby-pearl, —  
 But these are jes' Spring's pickets ; sure  
 ez sin,  
 The rebble frosts 'll try to drive 'em in ;  
 For half our May 's so awfully like  
 May n't,  
 't would rile a Shaker or an evrige saint ;  
 Though I own up I like our back'ard  
 springs  
 Thet kind o' haggie with their greens  
 an' things,  
 An' when you 'most give up, 'uthout  
 more words  
 Toss the fields full o' blossoms, leaves,  
 an' birds :  
 Thet 's Northun natur', slow an' apt to  
 doubt,  
 But when it *doos* git stirred, ther' 's no  
 gin-out !

Fust come the blackbirds clatt'rin' in  
 tall trees,  
 An' settlin' things in windy Congresses, —  
 Queer politicians, though, for I 'll be  
 skinned  
 Ef all on 'em don't head aginst the wind.  
 'fore long the trees begin to show be-  
 lief, —  
 The maple crimsons to a coral-reef,  
 Then saffern swarms swing off from all  
 the willers  
 So plump they look like yaller caterpil-  
 lars,

Then gray hossches'nuts leetle hands  
 unfold  
 Softer 'n a baby's be at three days old :  
 Thet 's robin-redbreast's almanick ; he  
 knows  
 Thet arter this ther' 's only blossom-  
 snows ;  
 So, choosin' out a handy crotch an'  
 spouse,  
 He goes to plast'rin' his adobë house.

Then seems to come a hitch, — things  
 lag behind,  
 Till some fine mornin' Spring makes up  
 her mind,  
 An' ez, when snow-swelled rivers cresh  
 their dams  
 Heaped-up with ice thet dovetails in  
 an' jams,  
 A leak comes spirtin' thru some pin-hole  
 cleft,  
 Grows stronger, fercer, tears out right  
 an' left,  
 Then all the waters bow themselves an'  
 come,  
 Suddin, in one gret slope o' shedderin'  
 foam,  
 Jes' so our Spring gits everythin' in tune  
 An' gives one leap from Aperl into  
 June :  
 Then all comes crowdin' in ; afore you  
 think,  
 Young oak-leaves mist the side-hill  
 woods with pink ;  
 The catbird in the laylock-bush is loud ;  
 The orchards turn to heaps o' rosy cloud ;  
 Red-cedars blossom tu, though few folks  
 know it,  
 An' look all dipt in sunshine like a poet ;  
 The lime-trees pile their solid stacks o'  
 shade  
 An' drows'ly simmer with the bees'  
 sweet trade ;  
 In ellum-shrouds the flashin' hangbird  
 clings  
 An' for the summer vy'ge his hammock  
 slings ;  
 All down the loose-walled lanes in  
 archin' bowers  
 The barb'ry'droops its strings o' golden  
 flowers,  
 Whose shrinkin' hearts the school-gals  
 love to try  
 With pins, — they 'll worry yourn so  
 boys, bimeby !  
 But I don't love your cat'logue style, —  
 do you ? —



Ez ef to sell off Natur' by vendoo ;  
 One word with blood in 't 's twice ez  
 good ez two :  
 'nuff sed, June's bridesman, poet o' the  
 year,  
 Gladness on wings, the bobolink, is here ;  
 Half-hid in tip-top apple-blooms he  
 swings,  
 Or climbs aginst the breeze with quiv-  
 erin' wings,  
 Or, givin' way to 't in a mock despair,  
 Runs down, a brook o' laughter, thru  
 the air.

I ollus feel the sap start in my veins  
 In Spring, with curus heats an' prickly  
 pains,  
 Thet drive me, when I git a chance, to  
 walk  
 Off by myself to hev a privit talk  
 With a queer critter thet can't seem to  
 'gree  
 Along o' me like most folks, — Mister  
 Me.  
 Ther' 's times when I 'm unsoshle ez a  
 stone,  
 An' sort o' suffercate to be alone, —  
 I 'm crowded jes' to think thet folks are  
 nigh,  
 An' can't bear nothin' closer than the  
 sky ;  
 Now the wind 's full ez shifty in the  
 mind  
 Ez wut it is ou'-doors, ef I ain't blind,  
 An' sometimes, in the fairest sou'west  
 weather,  
 My innard vane pints east for weeks to-  
 gether,  
 My natur' gits all goose-flesh, an' my sins  
 Come drizzlin' on my conscience sharp  
 ez pins :  
 Wal, et sech times I jes' slip out o' sight  
 An' take it out in a fair stan'-up fight  
 With the one cuss I can't lay on the shelf,  
 The crook'dest stick in all the heap, —  
 Myself.

'T wuz so las' Sabbath arter meetin'-  
 time :  
 Findin' my feelin's would n't noways  
 rhyme  
 With nobody's, but off the hendle flew  
 An' took things from an east-wind pint  
 o' view,  
 I started off to lose me in the hills  
 Where the pines be, up back o' 'Siah's  
 Mills :

Pines, ef you 're blue, are the best friends  
 I know,  
 They mope an' sigh an' sheer your feel-  
 in's ho, —  
 They hesh the ground beneath so, tu, I  
 swan,  
 You half-forgit you 've gut a body on.  
 Ther' 's a small school'us' there where  
 four roads meet,  
 The door-steps hollered out by little feet,  
 An' side-posts carved with names whose  
 owners grew  
 To gret men, some on 'em, an' deacons,  
 tu ;  
 't ain't used no longer, coz the town  
 hez gut  
 A high-school, where they teach the  
 Lord knows wut :  
 Three-story larnin' 's pop'lar now ; I  
 guess  
 We thriv' ez wal on jes' two stories less,  
 For it strikes me ther' 's sech a thing ez  
 sinnin'  
 By overloadin' children's underpinnin' :  
 Wal, here it wuz I larned my A B C,  
 An' it 's a kind o' favorite spot with me.  
 We 're curus critters : Now ain't jes' the  
 minute  
 Thet ever fits us easy while we 're in  
 it ;  
 Long ez 't wuz futur', 't would be perfect  
 bliss, —  
 Soon ez it 's past, *thet* time 's wuth ten  
 o' this ;  
 An' yit there ain't a man thet need be  
 told  
 Thet Now 's the only bird lays eggs o'  
 gold.  
 A knee-high lad, I used to plot an' plan  
 An' think 't wuz life's cap-sheaf to be a  
 man ;  
 Now, gittin' gray, there's nothin' I enjoy  
 Like dreamin' back along into a boy :  
 So the ole school'us' is a place I choose  
 Afore all others, ef I want to muse ;  
 I set down where I used to set, an' git  
 My boyhood back, an' better things with  
 it, —  
 Faith, Hope, an' sunthin', ef it is n't  
 Cherrity,  
 It 's want o' guile, an' thet 's ez gret a  
 rerrity, —  
 While Fancy's cushin', free to Prince  
 and Clown,  
 Makes the hard bench ez soft ez milk-  
 weed-down.

Now, 'fore I knowed, thet Sabbath  
arbernoon

When I sot out to tramp myself in tune,  
I found me in the school'us' on my seat,  
Drummin' the march to No-wheres with  
my feet.

Thinkin' o' nothin', I've heerd ole folks  
say

Is a hard kind o' dooty in its way :  
It's thinkin' everythin' you ever knew,  
Or ever hearn, to make your feelin's blue.  
I sot there tryin' thet on for a spell :  
I thought o' the Rebellion, then o' Hell,  
Which some folks tell ye now is jest a  
metterfor

(A the'ry, p'raps, it wun't *feel* none the  
better for) ;

I thought o' Reconstruction, wut we'd  
win

Patchin' our patent self-blow-up agin :  
I thought ef this 'ere milkin' o' the  
wits,

So much a month, warn't givin' Natur'  
fits, —

Ef folks warn't druv, findin' their own  
milk fail,

To work the cow thet hez an iron tail,  
An' ef ideas 'thout ripenin' in the pan  
Would send up cream to humor ary man :  
From this to thet I let my worryin' creep,  
Till finally I must ha' fell asleep.

Our lives in sleep are some like streams  
thet glide

'twixt flesh an' sperrit boundin' on each  
side,

Where both shores' shadders kind o'  
mix an' mingle

In sunthin' thet ain't jes' like either  
single ;

An' when you cast off moorin's from  
To-day,

An' down towards To-morrer drift away,  
The imiges thet tengle on the stream  
Make a new upside-down'ard world o'  
dream :

Sometimes they seem like sunrise-streaks  
an' warnin's

O' wut 'll be in Heaven on Sabbath-  
mornin's,

An', mixed right in ez ef jest out o' spite,  
Sunthin' thet says your supper ain't gone  
right.

I'm gret on dreams, an' often when I  
wake,

I've lived so much it makes my mem'ry  
ache,

An' can't skurce take a cat-nap in my  
cheer  
'thout hevin' 'em, some good, some bad,  
all queer.

Now I wuz settin' where I'd ben, it  
seemed,

An' ain't sure yit whether I r'ally  
dreamed,

Nor, ef I did, how long I might ha'  
slep',

When I hearn some un stompin' up the  
step,

An' lookin' round, ef two an' two make  
four,

I see a Pilgrim Father in the door.

He wore a steeple-hat, tall boots, an'  
spurs

With rowels to 'em big ez ches'nut-burrs,  
An' his gret sword behind him sloped  
away

Long 'z a man's speech thet dunno wut  
to say. —

“Ef your name's Biglow, an' your  
given-name

Hosee,” sez he, “it's arter you I came ;  
I'm your gret-gran'ther multiplied by  
three.” —

“My wut ?” sez I. — “Your gret-gret-  
gret,” sez he :

“You would n't ha' never ben here but  
for me.

Two hundred an' three year ago this May  
The ship I come in sailed up Boston Bay ;  
I'd ben a cunnie in our Civil War, —  
But wut on airth hev *you* gut up one for ?  
Coz we du things in England, 't ain't for  
you

To git a notion you can du 'em tu :

I'm told you write in public prints : ef  
true,

It's nateral you should know a thing  
or two.” —

“Thet air's an argymunt I can't en-  
dorse, —

't would prove, coz you wear spurs, you  
kep' a horse :

For brains,” sez I, “wutever you may  
think,

Ain't boun' to cash the draf's o' pen-an'-  
ink, —

Though mos' folks write ez ef they hoped  
jes' quickenin'

The churn would argoo skim-milk into  
thickenin' ;

But skim-milk ain't a thing to change  
its view

O' wut it's meant for more 'n a smoky flue.

But du pray tell me, 'fore we further go,  
How in all Natur' did you come to know  
'bout our affairs," sez I, "in Kingdom-  
Come?" —

"Wal, I worked round at sperrit-rappin'  
some,  
An' danced the tables till their legs wuz  
gone,

In hopes o' larnin' wut wuz goin' on,"  
Sez he, "but mejums lie so like all-split  
Thet I concluded it wuz best to quit.

But, come now, ef you wun't confess to  
knowin',

You 've some conjectures how the  
thing's a-goin'." —

"Gran'ther," sez I, "a vane warn't  
never known

Nor asked to hev a judgment of its own ;  
An' yit, ef 't ain't gut rusty in the jints,  
It's safe to trust its say on certin pints :  
It knows the wind's opinions to a T,  
An' the wind settles wut the weather 'll  
be."

"I never thought a scion of our stock  
Could grow the wood to make a weather-  
cock ;

When I wuz younger 'n you, skurce  
more 'n a shaver,  
No airthly wind," sez he, "could make  
me waver !"

(Ez he said this, he clinched his jaw an'  
forehead,  
Hitchin' his belt to bring his sword-hilt  
foward.) —

"Jes so it wuz with me," sez I, "I swow,  
When I wuz younger 'n wut you see me  
now, —

Nothin' from Adam's fall to Huldy's  
bonnet,

Thet I warn't full-cocked with my jedg-  
ment on it ;

But now I 'm gittin' on in life, I find  
It's a sight harder to make up my  
mind, —

Nor I don't often try tu, when events  
Will du it for me free of all expense.  
The moral question 's ollus plain  
enough, —

It's jes' the human-natur' side thet 's  
tough ;

Wut's best to think may n't puzzle me  
nor you, —

The pinch comes in decidin' wut to *du* ;  
Ef you *read* History, all runs smooth ez  
grease,

Coz there the men ain't nothin' more 'n  
idees, —

But come to *make* it, ez we must to-day,  
Th' idees hev arms an' legs an' stop the  
way :

It's easy fixin' things in facts an' fig-  
gers, —

They can't resist, nor warn't brought up  
with niggers ;

But come to try your the'ry on, — why,  
then

Your facts an' figgers change to ign'ant  
men

Actin' ez ugly —" — "Smite 'em hip  
an' thigh !"

Sez gran'ther, "and let every man-child  
die !

Oh for three weeks o' Crommle an' the  
Lord !

Up, Isr'el, to your tents an' grind the  
sword !" —

"Thet kind o' thing worked wal in ole  
Judee,

But you forgit how long it 's ben A. D. ;  
You think thet 's ellerkence, — I call it  
shoddy,

A thing," sez I, "wun't cover soul nor  
body ;

I like the plain all-wool o' common-  
sense,

Thet warms ye now, an' will a twelve-  
month hence.

You took to follerin' where the Prophets  
beckoned,

An', fust you knowed on, back come  
Charles the Second ;

Now wut I want 's to hev all *we* gain  
stick,

An' not to start Millennium too quick ;  
We hain't to punish only, but to keep,  
An' the cure 's gut to go a cent'ry deep."

"Wal, milk-an'-water ain't the best o'  
glue,"

Sez he, "an' so you 'll find before you 're  
thru ;

Ef reshness venters sunthin', shilly-  
shally

Loses ez often wut 's ten times the vally.  
Thet exe of ourn, when Charles's neck  
gut split,

Opened a gap thet ain't bridged over yit :  
Slav'ry 's your Charles, the Lord hez gin  
the exe —"

"Our Charles," sez I, "hez gut eight  
million necks.

The hardest question ain't the black  
man's right,



The trouble is to 'mancipate the white ;  
One's chained in body an' can be sot  
free,

But t' other's chained in soul to an idee :  
It's a long job, but we shall worry thru  
it ;

Ef bagnets fail, the spellin'-book must  
du it."

"Hosee," sez he, "I think you're goin'  
to fail :

The rattlesnake ain't dangerous in the  
tail ;

This 'ere rebellion's nothin but the  
rattle, —

You'll stomp on thet an' think you've  
won the bettle ;

It's Slavery thet's the fangs an' thinkin'  
head,

An' ef you want selvation, cresh it  
dead, —

An' cresh it suddin, or you'll larn by  
waitin'

Thet Chance wun't stop to listen to de-  
batin' !" —

"God's truth !" sez I, — "an' ef I held  
the club,

An' knowed jes' where to strike, — but  
there's the rub !" —

"Strike soon," sez he, "or you'll be  
deadly ailin', —

Folks thet's afear'd to fail are sure o'  
failin' ;

God hates your sneakin' creturs thet  
believe

He'll settle things they run away an'  
leave !"

He brought his foot down fercely, ez he  
spoke,

An' give me sech a startle thet I woke.

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## No. VII.

### LATEST VIEWS OF MR. BIGLOW.

#### PRELIMINARY NOTE.

[It is with feelings of the liveliest pain that we inform our readers of the death of the Reverend Homer Wilbur, A. M., which took place suddenly, by an apoplectic stroke, on the afternoon of Christmas day, 1862. Our venerable friend (for so we may venture to call him, though we never enjoyed the high privilege of his personal acquaintance) was in his eighty-fourth year, having been born June 12, 1779, at

Pigsgusset Precinct (now West Jerusha) in the then District of Maine. Graduated with distinction at Hubville College in 1805, he pursued his theological studies with the late Reverend Preserved Thacker, D. D., and was called to the charge of the First Society in Jaalam in 1809, where he remained till his death.

"As an antiquary he has probably left no superior, if, indeed, an equal," writes his friend and colleague, the Reverend Jeduthun Hitchcock, to whom we are indebted for the above facts ; "in proof of which I need only allude to his 'History of Jaalam, Genealogical, Topographical, and Ecclesiastical,' 1849, which has won him an eminent and enduring place in our more solid and useful literature. It is only to be regretted that his intense application to historical studies should have so entirely withdrawn him from the pursuit of poetical composition, for which he was endowed by Nature with a remarkable aptitude. His well-known hymn, beginning 'With clouds of care encompassed round,' has been attributed in some collections to the late President Dwight, and it is hardly presumptuous to affirm that the simile of the rainbow in the eighth stanza would do no discredit to that polished pen."

We regret that we have not room at present for the whole of Mr. Hitchcock's exceedingly valuable communication. We hope to lay more liberal extracts from it before our readers at an early day. A summary of its contents will give some notion of its importance and interest. It contains : 1st, A biographical sketch of Mr. Wilbur, with notices of his predecessors in the pastoral office, and of eminent clerical contemporaries ; 2d, An obituary of deceased, from the Punkin-Falls "Weekly Parallel" ; 3d, A list of his printed and manuscript productions and of projected works ; 4th, Personal anecdotes and recollections, with specimens of table-talk ; 5th, A tribute to his relict, Mrs. Dorcas (Pilcox) Wilbur ; 6th, A list of graduates fitted for different colleges by Mr. Wilbur, with biographical memoranda touching the more distinguished ; 7th, Concerning learned, charitable, and other societies, of which Mr. Wilbur was a member, and of those with which, had his life been prolonged, he would doubtless have been associated, with a complete catalogue of such Americans as have been Fellows of the Royal Society ; 8th, A brief summary of Mr. Wilbur's latest conclusions concerning the Tenth Horn of the Beast in its special application to recent events for which the public, as Mr. Hitch-

cock assures us, have been waiting with feelings of lively anticipation; 9th, Mr. Hitchcock's own views on the same topic; and, 10th, A brief essay on the importance of local histories. It will be apparent that the duty of preparing Mr. Wilbur's biography could not have fallen into more sympathetic hands.

In a private letter with which the reverend gentleman has since favored us, he expresses the opinion that Mr. Wilbur's life was shortened by our unhappy civil war. It disturbed his studies, dislocated all his habitual associations and trains of thought, and unsettled the foundations of a faith, rather the result of habit than conviction, in the capacity of man for self-government. "Such has been the felicity of my life," he said to Mr. Hitchcock, on the very morning of the day he died, "that, through the divine mercy, I could always say, *Summum nec metuo diem, nec opto*. It has been my habit, as you know, on every recurrence of this blessed anniversary, to read Milton's 'Hymn of the Nativity' till its sublime harmonies so dilated my soul and quickened its spiritual sense that I seemed to hear that other song which gave assurance to the shepherds that there was One who would lead them also in green pastures and beside the still waters. But to-day I have been unable to think of anything but that mournful text, 'I came not to send peace, but a sword,' and, did it not smack of pagan presumptuousness, could almost wish I had never lived to see this day."

Mr. Hitchcock also informs us that his friend "lies buried in the Jaalam graveyard, under a large red-cedar which he specially admired. A neat and substantial monument is to be erected over his remains, with a Latin epitaph written by himself; for he was accustomed to say, pleasantly, 'that there was at least one occasion in a scholar's life when he might show the advantages of a classical training.'"

The following fragment of a letter addressed to us, and apparently intended to accompany Mr. Biglow's contribution to the present number, was found upon his table after his decease. — EDITORS ATLANTIC MONTHLY.]

TO THE EDITORS OF THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

JAALAM, 24th Dec., 1862.

RESPECTED SIRS, — The infirm state of my bodily health would be a sufficient apology for not taking up the pen at this

time, wholesome as I deem it for the mind to apricate in the shelter of epistolary confidence, were it not that a considerable, I might even say a large, number of individuals in this parish expect from their pastor some publick expression of sentiment at this crisis. Moreover, *Qui tacitus ardet magis uritur*. In trying times like these, the besetting sin of undisciplined minds is to seek refuge from inexplicable realities in the dangerous stimulant of angry partisanship or the indolent narcotick of vague and hopeful vaticination: *fortunamque suo temperat arbitrio*. Both by reason of my age and my natural temperament, I am unfitted for either. Unable to penetrate the inscrutable judgments of God, I am more than ever thankful that my life has been prolonged till I could in some small measure comprehend His mercy. As there is no man who does not at some time render himself amenable to the one, — *quum vix justus sit securus*, — so there is none that does not feel himself in daily need of the other.

I confess I cannot feel, as some do, a personal consolation for the manifest evils of this war in any remote or contingent advantages that may spring from it. I am old and weak, I can bear little, and can scarce hope to see better days; nor is it any adequate compensation to know that Nature is young and strong and can bear much. Old men philosophize over the past, but the present is only a burthen and a weariness. The one lies before them like a placid evening landscape; the other is full of the vexations and anxieties of house-keeping. It may be true enough that *misceat hæc illis, prohibetque Clotho fortunam stare*, but he who said it was fain at last to call in Atropos with her shears before her time; and I cannot help selfishly mourning that the fortune of our Republic could not at least stay till my days were numbered.

Tibullus would find the origin of wars in the great exaggeration of riches, and does not stick to say that in the days of the beechen trencher there was peace. But averse as I am by nature from all wars, the more as they have been especially fatal to libraries, I would have this one go on till we are reduced to wooden platters again, rather than surrender the principle to defend which it was undertaken. Though I believe Slavery to have been the cause of it, by so thoroughly demoralizing Northern politics for its own purposes as to give opportunity and hope to treason, yet I would not have our thought and purpose diverted from their true object, — the maintenance of the idea of Government.

We are not merely suppressing an enormous riot, but contending for the possibility of permanent order coexisting with democratical fickleness; and while I would not superstitiously venerate form to the sacrifice of substance, neither would I forget that an adherence to precedent and prescription can alone give that continuity and coherence under a democratical constitution which are inherent in the person of a despotick monarch and the selfishness of an aristocratical class. *Stet pro ratione voluntas* is as dangerous in a majority as in a tyrant.

I cannot allow the present production of my young friend to go out without a protest from me against a certain extremeness in his views, more pardonable in the poet than in the philosopher. While I agree with him, that the only cure for rebellion is suppression by force, yet I must animadvert upon certain phrases where I seem to see a coincidence with a popular fallacy on the subject of compromise. On the one hand there are those who do not see that the vital principle of Government and the seminal principle of Law cannot properly be made a subject of compromise at all, and on the other those who are equally blind to the truth that without a compromise of individual opinions, interests, and even rights, no society would be possible. *In medio tutissimus*. For my own part, I would gladly —

—  
 Ef I a song or two could make  
 Like rockets druv by their own  
 burnin',  
 All leap an' light, to leave a wake  
 Men's hearts an' faces skyward  
 turnin'! —  
 But, it strikes me, 'tain't jest the time  
 Fer stringin' words with settisfaction:  
 Wut 's wanted now 's the silent rhyme  
 'Twixt upright Will an' downright  
 Action.

Words, ef you keep 'em, pay their keep,  
 But gabble 's the short cut to ruin;  
 It 's gratis, (gals half-price,) but cheap  
 At no rate, ef it henders doin';  
 Ther 's nothin' wuss, 'less 't is to set  
 A martyr-prem'um upon jawrin':  
 Teapots git dangerous, ef you shet  
 Their lids down cn 'em with Fort  
 Warren.

'Bout long enough it 's ben discussed  
 Who sot the magazine afire,

An' whether, ef Bob Wickliffe bust,  
 'T would scare us more or blow us  
 higher.

D' ye s'pose the Gret Foreseer's plan  
 Wuz settled fer him in town-meetin' ?  
 Or thet ther 'd ben no Fall o' Man,  
 Ef Adam 'd on'y bit a sweetin' ?

Oh, Jon'than, ef you want to be  
 A rugged chap agin an' hearty,  
 Go fer wutever 'll hurt Jeff D.,  
 Nut wut 'll boost up ary party.  
 Here 's hell broke loose, an' we lay flat  
 With half the univarse a-singein',  
 Till Sen'tor This an' Gov'nor Thet  
 Stop squabblin' fer the garding-ingin.

It 's war we 're in, not politics;  
 It 's systems wrastlin' now, not parties;  
 An' victory in the eend 'll fix  
 Where longest will an' truest heart is.  
 An' wut 's the Gov'ment folks about ?  
 Tryin' to hope ther 's nothin' doin',  
 An' look ez though they did n't doubt  
 Sunthin' pertickler wuz a-brewin'.

Ther 's critters yit thet talk an' act  
 Fer wut they call Conciliation;  
 They 'd hand a buff'lo-drove a tract  
 When they wuz madder than all  
 Bashan.  
 Conciliate ? it jest means *be kicked*,  
 No metter how they phrase an' tone it;  
 It means thet we 're to set down licked,  
 Thet we 're poor shotes an' glad to  
 own it !

A war on tick 's ez dear 'z the deuce,  
 But it wun't leave no lastin' traces,  
 Ez 't would to make a sneakin' truce  
 Without no moral specie-basis:  
 Ef green-backs ain't nut jest the cheese,  
 I guess ther 's evils thet 's extremer, —  
 Fer instance, — shinplaster ideas  
 Like them put out by Gov'nor Sey-  
 mour.

Last year, the Nation, at a word,  
 When tremblin' Freedom cried to  
 shield her,  
 Flamed weldin' into one keen sword  
 Waitin' an' longin' fer a wielder:  
 A splendid flash ! — but how 'd the grasp  
 With sech a chance ez thet wuz tally ?  
 Ther warn't no meanin' in our clasp, —  
 Half this, half thet, all shilly-shally.



More men? More Man! It's there we fail;

Weak plans grow weaker yit by lengthenin' :

Wut use in addin' to the tail,  
When it's the head's in need o' strengthenin'?

We wanted one thet felt all Chief  
From roots o' hair to sole o' stockin',  
Square-sot with thousan'-ton belief  
In him an' us, ef earth went rockin'!

Ole Hick'ry would n't ha' stood see-saw  
'Bout doin' things till they wuz done with, —

He'd smashed the tables o' the Law  
In time o' need to load his gun with ;  
He could n't see but jest one side, —  
-Ef his, 't wuz God's, an' thet wuz plenty ;

An' so his "*Forrards!*" multiplied  
An army's fightin' weight by twenty.

But this 'ere histin', creak, creak, creak,  
Your cappen's heart up with a derrick,  
This tryin' to coax a lightnin'-streak  
Out of a half-discouraged hay-rick,  
This hangin' on mont' arter mont'  
Fer one sharp purpose 'mongst the twitter, —

I tell ye, it doos kind o' stunt  
The peth and sperit of a critter.

In six months where 'll the People be,  
Ef leaders look on revolution

Ez though it wuz a cup o' tea, —  
Jest social el'ments in solution?

This weighin' things doos wal enough  
When war cools down, an' comes to writin' ;

But while it's makin', the true stuff  
Is pison-mad, pig-headed fightin'.

Democ'acy gives every man

The right to be his own oppressor ;  
But a loose Gov'ment ain't the plan,  
Helpless ez spilled beans on a dresser :  
I tell ye one thing we might larn  
From them smart critters, the Seced-ers, —

Ef bein' right's the fust consarn,  
The 'fore-the-fust's cast-iron leaders.

But 'pears to me I see some signs  
That we're a-goin' to use our senses :

Jeff druv us into these hard lines,  
An' ough' to bear his half th' expenses ;

Slavery's Secession's heart an' will,  
South, North, East, West, where'er you find it,

An' ef it drors into War's mill,  
D' ye say them thunder-stones sha'n grind it?

D' ye s'pose, ef Jeff giv *him* a lick,  
Ole Hick'ry 'd tried his head to sof',  
So's 't would n't hurt thet ebony stick  
Thet's made our side see stars so of'n,  
"No!" he'd ha' thundered, "On you knees,

An' own one flag, one road to glory!  
Soft-heartedness, in times like these,  
Shows sof'ness in the upper story!"

An' why should we kick up a muss  
About the Pres'dunt's proclamation?  
It ain't a-goin' to lib'rate us,  
Ef we don't like emancipation :  
The right to be a cussed fool  
Is safe from all devices human,  
It's common (ez a gin'l rule)  
To every critter born o' woman.

So we're all right, an' I, fer one,  
Don't think our cause 'll lose in vally  
By rammin' Scriptur' in our gun,  
An' gittin' Natur' fer an ally :  
Thank God, say I, fer even a plan  
To lift one human bein's level,  
Give one more chance to make a man,  
Or, anyhow, to spile a devil!

Not thet I'm one thet much expect'  
Millennium by express to-morrow ;  
They *will* miscarry, — I rec'lec'  
Tu many on 'em, to my sorer :  
Men ain't made angels in a day,  
No matter how you mould an' labor 'em, —

Nor 'riginal ones, I guess, don't stay  
With Abe so of'n ez with Abraham.

The'ry thinks Fact a pooty thing,  
An' wants the banns read right en-suin' ;

But fact wun't noways wear the ring,  
'Thout years o' settin' up an' wootin' :  
Though, arter all, Time's dial-plate  
Marks cent'ries with the minute-finger,

An' Good can't never come tu late,  
Though it doos seem to try an' linger.

An' come wut will, I think it's grand  
Abe's gut his will et last bloom-fur-  
naced

In trial-flames till it'll stand

The strain o' bein' in deadly earnest:  
That's wut we want, — we want to  
know

The folks on our side hez the bravery  
To b'lieve ez hard, come weal, come woe,  
In Freedom ez Jeff doos in Slavery.

Set the two forces foot to foot,

An' every man knows who'll be win-  
ner,

Whose faith in God hez ary root

That goes down deeper than his din-  
ner:

Then 't will be feit from pole to pole,

Without no need o' proclamation,  
Earth's biggest Country's gut her soul  
An' risen up Earth's Greatest Nation!

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No. VIII.

KETTELOPOTOMACHIA.

PRELIMINARY NOTE.

IN the month of February, 1866, the editors of the "Atlantic Monthly" received from the Rev. Mr. Hitchcock of Jaalam a letter enclosing the macaronic verses which follow, and promising to send more, if more should be communicated. "They were rapped out on the evening of Thursday last past," he says, "by what claimed to be the spirit of my late predecessor in the ministry here, the Rev. Dr. Wilbur, through the medium of a young man at present domiciled in my family. As to the possibility of such spiritual manifestations, or whether they be properly so entitled, I express no opinion, as there is a division of sentiment on that subject in the parish, and many persons of the highest respectability in social standing entertain opposing views. The young man who was improved as a medium submitted himself to the experiment with manifest reluctance, and is still unprepared to believe in the authenticity of the manifestations. During his residence with me his deportment has always been exemplary; he has been constant in his attendance upon our family devotions and the public ministrations of the Word, and has more than once privately stated to me, that the latter had often brought him under deep concern of mind. The table is an ordinary

quadrupedal one, weighing about thirty pounds, three feet seven inches and a half in height, four feet square on the top, and of beech or maple, I am not definitely prepared to say which. It had once belonged to my respected predecessor, and had been, so far as I can learn upon careful inquiry, of perfectly regular and correct habits up to the evening in question. On that occasion the young man previously alluded to had been sitting with his hands resting carelessly upon it, while I read over to him at his request certain portions of my last Sabbath's discourse. On a sudden the rappings, as they are called, commenced to render themselves audible, at first faintly, but in process of time more distinctly and with violent agitation of the table. The young man expressed himself both surprised and pained by the wholly unexpected, and, so far as he was concerned, unprecedented occurrence. At the earnest solicitation, however, of several who happened to be present, he consented to go on with the experiment, and with the assistance of the alphabet commonly employed in similar emergencies, the following communication was obtained and written down immediately by myself. Whether any, and if so, how much weight should be attached to it, I venture no decision. That Dr. Wilbur had sometimes employed his leisure in Latin versification I have ascertained to be the case, though all that has been discovered of that nature among his papers consists of some fragmentary passages of a version into hexameters of portions of the Song of Solomon. These I had communicated about a week or ten days previous [ly] to the young gentleman who officiated as medium in the communication afterwards received. I have thus, I believe, stated all the material facts that have any elucidative bearing upon this mysterious occurrence."

So far Mr. Hitchcock, who seems perfectly master of Webster's unabridged quarto, and whose flowing style leads him into certain further expatiations for which we have not room. We have since learned that the young man he speaks of was a sophomore, put under his care during a sentence of rustication from — College, where he had distinguished himself rather by physical experiments on the comparative power of resistance in window-glass to various solid substances, than in the more regular studies of the place. In answer to a letter of inquiry, the professor of Latin says, "There was no harm in the boy that I know of beyond his loving mischief more than Latin, nor can I think of any spirits likely to possess him except

those commonly called animal. He was certainly not remarkable for his Latinity, but I see nothing in the verses you enclose that would lead me to think them beyond his capacity, or the result of any special inspiration whether of beech or maple. Had that of *birch* been tried upon him earlier and more faithfully, the verses would perhaps have been better in quality and certainly in quantity." This exact and thorough scholar then goes on to point out many false quantities and barbarisms. It is but fair to say, however, that the author, whoever he was, seems not to have been unaware of some of them himself, as is shown by a great many notes appended to the verses as we received them, and purporting to be by Scaliger, Bentley and others, — among them the *Esprit de Voltaire!* These we have omitted as clearly meant to be humorous and altogether failing therein.

Though entirely satisfied that the verses are altogether unworthy of Mr. Wilbur, who seems to have been a tolerable Latin scholar after the fashion of his day, yet we have determined to print them here partly as belonging to the *res gestæ* of this collection, and partly as a warning to their putative author which may keep him from such indecorous pranks for the future.

#### KETTELOPOTOMACHIA.

P. Ovidii Nasonis carmen heroicum macaronicum perplexametrum, inter Getas getico more compostum, denuo per medium ardentispiritualement, adjuvante mensâ diabolice obsessâ, recuperatum, curâque Jo. Conradi Schwarzii umbræ, aliis necnon plurimis adjuvantibus, restitutum.

#### LIBER I.

PUNCTORUM garretos colens et cellara  
 Quinque,  
 Gutteribus quæ et gaudes sundayam  
 abstingere frontem,  
 Plerumque insidos solita fluitare liquore  
 Tanglepedem quem homines appellant  
 Di quoque rotgut,  
 Pimpliidis, rubicundaque, Musa, O,  
 bourbonolensque, 5  
 Fenianas rixas procul, alma, brogipotentis  
 Patricii cyathos iterantis et horrida  
 bella,  
 Backos dum virides viridis Brigitta remittit,

Linquens, eximios celebrem, da, Virginienses

Rowdes, præcipue et Tr, heros alte,  
 Polarde! 10

Insignes juvenesque, illo certamine  
 lictos,

Colemane, Tylere, nec vos oblivione  
 relinquam.

Ampla aquilæ invictæ fausto est sub  
 tegmine terra,

Backyfer, ooiskeo pollens, ebenuque  
 bipede,

Socors presidum et altrix (denique  
 quidruminantium), 15

Duplefveorum uberrima; illis et integre  
 cordi est

Deplere assidue et sine proprio incom-  
 modo fiscum;

Nunc etiam placidum hoc opus in-  
 victique secuti,

Goosam aureos ni eggos voluissent im-  
 mo necare

Quæ peperit, saltem ac de illis meliora  
 merentem. 20

Condidit hanc Smithius Dux, Cap-  
 tinus inclytus ille

Regis Ulyssæ instar, docti arcum in-  
 tendere longum;

Condidit ille Johnsmith, Virginiamque  
 vocavit,

Settledit autem Jacobus rex, nomine  
 primus,

Rascalis implens ruptis, blagardisque  
 deboshtis, 25

Militibusque ex Falstaffi legione fuga-  
 tis

Wenchisque illi quas poterant seducere  
 nuptas;

Virgineum, ah, littus matronis talibus  
 impar!

Progeniem stirpe ex hoc non sine stig-  
 mate ducunt

Multi sese qui jactant regum esse ne-  
 potes: 30

Haud omnes, Mater, genitos quæ nuper  
 habebas

Bello fortes, consilio cautos, virtute  
 decoros,

Jamque et habes, sparso si patrio in  
 sanguine virtus,

Mostrabisque iterum, antiquis sub astris  
 reducta!

De illis qui upkikitant, dicebam, rum-  
 pora tanta, 35

Letcheris et Floydis magnisque Extra  
 ordine Billis;



Est his prisca fides jurare et breakere wordum ;	Polko ut consule, gemens, Billy im- murmurat Extra ;
Poppere fellerum a tergo, aut stickere clam bowknifo,	Echo respondit, thesauro ex vacuo, pap- pam !
Haud sane facinus, dignum sed victrice lauro ;	Frustra explorant pocketa, ruber nare repertum ;
Larrupere et nigerum, factum præstan- tius ullo : 40	Officia expulsi aspiciunt rapta, et Para- disum
Ast chlamydem piciplumatam, Icariam, flito et ineptam,	Occlusum, viridesque haud illis nascere backos ; 70
Yanko gratis induere, illum et valido railo	Stupent tunc oculis madidis spittantque silenter.
Insuper acri equitare docere est hospitio uti.	Adhibere usu ast longæ vires prorsus inepti,
Nescio an ille Polardus duplefveoribus ortus,	Si non ut qui grindeat axve trabemve reuolvat,
Sed reputo potius de radice poorwite- manorum ; 45	Virginiam exercuciant totis nunc might- ibu' matrem ;
Fortuiti proles, ni fallor, Tylerus erat Præsidis, omnibus ab Whiggis nominatus a poor cuss ;	Non melius, puta, nono panis dimid- iumne est ? 75
Et nobilem tertium evincit venerabile nomen.	Readere ibi non posse est casus com- moner ullo ;
Ast animosi omnes bellique ad tympana ha ! ha !	Tanto intentius imprimere est opus ergo statuta ;
Vociferant læti, procul et si prælia, sive 50	Nemo propterea pejor, melior, sine doubto,
Hostem incautum atsito possint shoot- ere salvi ;	Obtineat qui contractum, si et postea rhino ;
Imperiique capaces, esset si stylus agmen,	Ergo Polardus, si quis, inxsuperabilis heros, 80
Pro dulci spoliabant et sine dangere fito.	Colemanus impavidus nondum, atque in purple natus
Præ ceterisque Polardus : si Secessia licta,	Tylerus Iohanides celerisque in flito Nathaniel,
Se nunquam licturum jurat, res et un- heardof, 55	Quisque optans digitos in tantum stick- ere pium,
Verbo hæsit, similisque audaci roosteri invicto,	Adstant accincti imprimere aut perrum- pere leges :
Dunghilli solitus rex pullos whoppere molles,	Quales os miserum rabidi tres ægre molossi, 85
Grantum, hirelingos stripes quique et splendida tollunt	Quales aut dubium textum atra in veste ministri,
Sidera, et Yankos, territum et omnem sarsuit orbem.	Tales circumstantabant nunc nostri inopes hoc job.
Usque dabant operam isti omnes, noctesque diesque, 60	Hisque Polardus voce canoro talia fatus :
Samuelem demulgere avunculum, id vero siccum ;	Primum autem, veluti est mos, præceps quisque liquorat,
Uberibus sed ejus, et horum est culpa, remotis,	Quisque et Nicotianum ingens quid inserit atrum, 90
Parvam domi vaccam, nec mora minima, quærunt,	Heroûm nitidum decus et solamen avi- tum,
Lactiarentem autem et droppam vix in die dantem ;	Masticat ac simul altisonans, spittatque profuse :
Reddite avunculi, et exclamabant, red- dite pappam ! 65	Quis de Virginia meruit præstantius unquam ?
	Quis se pro patria curavit impigre tutum !

Speechisque articulisque hominum quis  
 fortior ullus, 95  
 Ingeminans pennæ lickos et vulnere  
 vocis ?  
 Quisnam putidius (hic) sarsuit Yanki-  
 nimicos,  
 Sæpius aut dedit ultro datam et broke  
 his parolam ?  
 Mente inquassatus solidâque, tyranno  
 minante,  
 Horrisonis (hic) bombis mœnia et alta  
 quatente, 100  
 Sese promptum (hic) jactans Yankos  
 lickere centum,  
 Atque ad lastum invictus non surrendi-  
 dit unquam ?  
 Ergo haud meddlite, posco, mique re-  
 linquite (hic) hoc job,  
 Si non — knifumque enormem mostrat  
 spittatque tremendus.  
 Dixerat : ast alii reliquorant et sine  
 pauso 105  
 Pluggos incumbunt maxillis, uterque  
 vicissim  
 Certamine innocuo valde madidam in-  
 quinat assem :  
 Tylerus autem, dumque liquorat aridus  
 hostis,  
 Mirum aspicit duplumque bibentem,  
 astante Lyæo ;  
 Ardens impavidusque edidit tamen im-  
 pia verba ; 110  
 Duplum quamvis te aspicio, esses atque  
 viginti,  
 Mendacem dicerem totumque (hic)  
 thrasherem acervum ;  
 Nempe et thrasham, doggonatus (hic)  
 sim nisi faxem ;  
 Lambastabo omnes catawompositer-(hic)  
 que chawam !  
 Dixit et impulsus Ryeo ruitur bene ti-  
 tus, 115  
 Illi nam gravidum caput et laterem  
 habet in hatto.  
 Hunc inhiat titubansque Polardus,  
 optat et illum  
 Stickere inermem, protegit autem rite  
 Lyæus,  
 Et pronos geminos, oculis dubitantibus,  
 heros  
 Cernit et irritus hostes, dumque excogi-  
 tat utrum 120  
 Primum inpitchere, corrui, inter utros-  
 que recumbit,  
 Magno asino similis nimio sub pondere  
 quassus :

Colemanus hos mœstus, triste ruminans-  
 que solamen,  
 Inspicit hiccans, circumpittat terque  
 cubantes ;  
 Funereisque his ritibus humidis inde  
 solutus, 125  
 Sternitur, invalidusque illis superincidit  
 infans ;  
 Hos sepelit somnus et snorunt corniso-  
 nantes,  
 Watchmanus inscios ast calybooso deinde  
 reponit.

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 No. IX.

[THE Editors of the "Atlantic" have received so many letters of inquiry concerning the literary remains of the late Mr. Wilbur, mentioned by his colleague and successor, Rev. Jeduthan Hitchcock, in a communication from which we made some extracts in our number for February, 1863, and have been so repeatedly urged to print some part of them for the gratification of the public, that they felt it their duty at least to make some effort to satisfy so urgent a demand. They have accordingly carefully examined the papers intrusted to them, but find most of the productions of Mr. Wilbur's pen so fragmentary, and even chaotic, written as they are on the backs of letters in an exceedingly cramped chirography, — here a memorandum for a sermon ; there an observation of the weather ; now the measurement of an extraordinary head of cabbage, and then of the cerebrai capacity of some reverend brother deceased ; a calm inquiry into the state of modern literature, ending in a method of detecting if milk be impoverished with water, and the amount thereof ; one leaf beginning with a genealogy, to be interrupted half-way down with an entry that the brindle cow had calved, — that any attempts at selection seemed desperate. His only complete work, "An Enquiry concerning the Tenth Horn of the Beast," even in the abstract of it given by Mr. Hitchcock, would, by a rough computation of the printers, fill five entire numbers of our journal, and as he attempts, by a new application of decimal fractions, to identify it with the Emperor Julian, seems hardly of immediate concern to the general reader. Even the Table-Talk, though doubtless originally highly interesting in the domestic circle, is so largely made up of theological discussion and matters of local or preterite interest, that we have found it hard to extract anything that would at all satisfy expectation. But, in order to silence fur-

ther inquiry, we subjoin a few passages as illustrations of its general character.]

I think I could go near to be a perfect Christian if I were always a visitor, as I have sometimes been, at the house of some hospitable friend. I can show a great deal of self-denial where the best of everything is urged upon me with kindly importunity. It is not so very hard to turn the other cheek for a kiss. And when I meditate upon the pains taken for our entertainment in this life, on the endless variety of seasons, of human character and fortune, on the costliness of the hangings and furniture of our dwelling here, I sometimes feel a singular joy in looking upon myself as God's guest, and cannot but believe that we should all be wiser and happier, because more grateful, if we were always mindful of our privilege in this regard. And should we not rate more cheaply any honor that men could pay us, if we remembered that every day we sat at the table of the Great King? Yet must we not forget that we are in strictest bonds His servants also; for there is no impiety so abject as that which expects to be *dead-headed* (*ut ita dicam*) through life, and which, calling itself trust in Providence, is in reality asking Providence to trust us and taking up all our goods on false pretences. It is a wise rule to take the world as we find it, not always to leave it so.

It has often set me thinking when I find that I can always pick up plenty of empty nuts under my shagbark-tree. The squirrels know them by their lightness, and I have seldom seen one with the marks of their teeth in it. What a school-house is the world, if our wits would only not play truant! For I observe that men set most store by forms and symbols in proportion as they are mere shells. It is the outside they want and not the kernel. What stores of such do not many, who in material things are as shrewd as the squirrels, lay up for the spiritual winter-supply of themselves and their children! I have seen churches that seemed to me garners of these withered nuts, for it is wonderful how prosaic is the apprehension of symbols by the minds of most men. It is not one sect nor another, but all, who, like the dog of the fable, have let drop the spiritual substance of symbols for their material shadow. If one attribute miraculous virtues to mere holy water, that beautiful emblem of inward purification at the door of God's house, another cannot comprehend the significance of baptism without being ducked over head and ears in the liquid vehicle thereof.

[Perhaps a word of historical comment may be permitted here. My late revered predecessor was, I would humbly affirm, as free from prejudice as falls to the lot of the most highly favored individuals of our species. To be sure, I have heard him say that, "what were called strong prejudices, were in fact only the repulsion of sensitive organizations from that moral and even physical effluvia through which some natures by providential appointment, like certain unsavory quadrupeds, gave warning of their neighborhood. Better ten mistaken suspicions of this kind than one close encounter." This he said somewhat in heat, on being questioned as to his motives for always refusing his pulpit to those itinerant professors of vicarious benevolence who end their discourses by taking up a collection. But at another time I remember his saying, "that there was one large thing which small minds always found room for, and that was great prejudices." This, however, by the way. The statement which I purposed to make was simply this. Down to A. D. 1830, Jaalam had consisted of a single parish, with one house set apart for religious services. In that year the foundations of a Baptist Society were laid by the labors of Elder Joash Q. Balcom, 2d. As the members of the new body were drawn from the First Parish, Mr. Wilbur was for a time considerably exercised in mind. He even went so far as on one occasion to follow the reprehensible practice of the earlier Puritan divines in choosing a punning text, and preached from Hebrews xiii. 9: "Be not carried about with *divers* and strange doctrines." He afterwards, in accordance with one of his own maxims, — "to get a dead injury out of the mind as soon as is decent, bury it, and then ventilate," — in accordance with this maxim, I say, he lived on very friendly terms with Rev. Shearjashub Scringour, present pastor of the Baptist Society in Jaalam. Yet I think it was never displeasing to him that the church edifice of that society (though otherwise a creditable specimen of architecture) remained without a bell, as indeed it does to this day. So much seemed necessary to do away with any appearance of acerbity toward a respectable community of professing Christians, which might be suspected in the conclusion of the above paragraph. — J. H.]

In lighter moods he was not averse from an innocent play upon words. Looking up from his newspaper one morning as I entered his study he said, "When I read a debate in Congress, I feel as if I were



sitting at the feet of Zeno in the shadow of the Portico." On my expressing a natural surprise, he added, smiling, "Why, at such times the only view which honorable members give me of what goes on in the world is through their intercolumniations." I smiled at this after a moment's reflection, and he added gravely, "The most punctilious refinement of manners is the only salt that will keep a democracy from stinking; and what are we to expect from the people, if their representatives set them such lessons? Mr. Everett's whole life has been a sermon from this text. There was, at least, this advantage in duelling, that it set a certain limit on the tongue. When society laid by the rapier, it buckled on the more subtle blade of etiquette wherewith to keep obtrusive vulgarity at bay." In this connection, I may be permitted to recall a playful remark of his upon another occasion. The painful divisions in the First Parish, A. D. 1844, occasioned by the wild notions in respect to the rights of (what Mr. Wilbur, so far as concerned the reasoning faculty, always called) the unfairest part of creation, put forth by Miss Parthenia Almira Fitz, are too well known to need more than a passing allusion. It was during these heats, long since happily allayed, that Mr. Wilbur remarked that "the Church had more trouble in dealing with one *sheresiarch* than with twenty *heresiarchs*," and that the men's *conscia recti*, or certainty of being right, was nothing to the women's.

When I once asked his opinion of a poetical composition on which I had expended no little pains, he read it attentively, and then remarked, "Unless one's thought pack more neatly in verse than in prose, it is wiser to refrain. Commonplace gains nothing by being translated into rhyme, for it is something which no hocus-pocus can transubstantiate with the real presence of living thought. You entitle your piece, 'My Mother's Grave,' and expend four pages of useful paper in detailing your emotions there. But, my dear sir, watering does not improve the quality of ink, even though you should do it with tears. To publish a sorrow to Tom, Dick, and Harry is in some sort to advertise its unreality, for I have observed in my intercourse with the afflicted that the deepest grief instinctively hides its face with its hands and is silent. If your piece were printed, I have no doubt it would be popular, for people like to fancy that they feel much better than the trouble of feeling. I would put all poets on oath whether they have striven to say everything they possibly could think of, or to leave out all they

could not help saying. In your own case, my worthy young friend, what you have written is merely a deliberate exercise, the gymnastic of sentiment. For your excellent maternal relative is still alive, and is to take tea with me this evening, D. V. Beware of simulated feeling; it is hypocrisy's first cousin; it is especially dangerous to a preacher; for he who says one day, 'Go to, let me seem to be pathetic,' may be nearer than he thinks to saying, 'Go to, let me seem to be virtuous, or earnest, or under sorrow for sin.' Depend upon it, Sappho loved her verses more sincerely than she did Phaon, and Petrarch his sonnets better than Laura, who was indeed but his poetical stalking-horse. After you shall have once heard that muffled rattle of the clods on the coffin-lid of an irreparable loss, you will grow acquainted with a pathos that will make all elegies hateful. When I was of your age, I also for a time mistook my desire to write verses for an authentic call of my nature in that direction. But one day as I was going forth for a walk, with my head full of an 'Elegy on the Death of Flirtilla,' and vainly groping after a rhyme for *lily* that should not be *silly* or *chilly*, I saw my eldest boy Homer busy over the rain-water hogshead, in that childish experiment at parthenogenesis, the changing a horse-hair into a water-snake. An immersion of six weeks showed no change in the obstinate filament. Here was a stroke of unintended sarcasm. Had I not been doing in my study precisely what my boy was doing out of doors? Had my thoughts any more chance of coming to life by being submerged in rhyme than his hair by soaking in water? I burned my elegy and took a course of Edwards on the Will. People do not make poetry; it is made out of *them* by a process for which I do not find myself fitted. Nevertheless, the writing of verses is a good rhetorical exercitation, as teaching us what to shun most carefully in prose. For prose bewitched is like window-glass with bubbles in it, distorting what it should show with pellucid veracity."

It is unwise to insist on doctrinal points as vital to religion. The Bread of Life is wholesome and sufficing in itself, but gulped down with these kick-shaws cooked up by theologians, it is apt to produce an indigestion, nay, even at last an incurable dyspepsia of scepticism.

One of the most inexcusable weaknesses of Americans is in signing their names to what are called credentials. But for my interposition, a person who shall be nameless would have taken from this town a recommendation for an office of trust sub-

scribed by the selectmen and all the voters of both parties, ascribing to him as many good qualities as if it had been his tombstone. The excuse was that it would be well for the town to be rid of him, as it would ere long be obliged to maintain him. I would not refuse my name to modest merit, but I would be as cautious as in signing a bond. [I trust I shall be subjected to no imputation of unbecoming vanity, if I mention the fact that Mr. W. indorsed my own qualifications as teacher of the high-school at Pequash Junction. J. H.] When I see a certificate of character with everybody's name to it, I regard it as a letter of introduction from the Devil. Never give a man your name unless you are willing to trust him with your reputation.

There seem nowadays to be two sources of literary inspiration, — fulness of mind and emptiness of pocket.

I am often struck, especially in reading Montaigne, with the obviousness and familiarity of a great writer's thoughts, and the freshness they gain because said by him. The truth is, we mix their greatness with all they say and give it our best attention. Johannes Faber sic cogitavit, would be no enticing preface to a book, but an accredited name gives credit like the signature to a note of hand. It is the advantage of fame that it is always privileged to take the world by the button, and a thing is weightier for Shakespeare's uttering it by the whole amount of his personality.

It is singular how impatient men are with overpraise of others, how patient with overpraise of themselves; and yet the one does them no injury, while the other may be their ruin.

People are apt to confound mere alertness of mind with attention. The one is but the flying abroad of all the faculties to the open doors and windows at every passing rumor; the other is the concentration of every one of them in a single focus, as in the alchemist over his alembic at the moment of expected projection. Attention is the stuff that memory is made of, and memory is accumulated genius.

Do not look for the Millennium as imminent. One generation is apt to get all the wear it can out of the cast clothes of the last, and is always sure to use up every paling of the old fence that will hold a nail in building the new.

You suspect a kind of vanity in my genealogical enthusiasm. Perhaps you are right; but it is a universal foible. Where it does not show itself in a personal and private way, it becomes public and gregarious. We flatter ourselves in the Pilgrim Fathers, and the Virginian offshoot of a transported convict swells with the fancy of a cavalier ancestry. Pride of birth, I have noticed, takes two forms. One complacently traces himself up to a coronet; another, defiantly, to a lapstone. The sentiment is precisely the same in both cases, only that one is the positive and the other the negative pole of it.

Seeing a goat the other day kneeling in order to graze with less trouble, it seemed to me a type of the common notion of prayer. Most people are ready enough to go down on their knees for material blessings, but how few for those spiritual gifts which alone are an answer to our orisons, if we but knew it!

Some people, nowadays, seem to have hit upon a new moralization of the moth and the candle. They would lock up the light of Truth, lest poor Psyche should put it out in her effort to draw nigh to it.

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No. X.

MR. HOSEA BIGLOW TO THE EDITOR  
OF THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

DEAR SIR, — Your letter come to han',  
Requestin' me to please be funny;  
But I ain't made upon a plan  
Thet knows wut 's comin', gall or  
honey:  
Ther's 's times the world doos look so  
queer,  
Odd fancies come afore I call 'em;  
An' then agin, for half a year,  
No preacher 'thout a call 's more  
solemn.

You're 'n want o' sunthin' light an' cute,  
Rattlin' an' shrewd an' kin' o' jingle-  
ish,  
An' wish, pervidin' it 'ould suit,  
I'd take an' citify my English.  
I ken write long-tailed, ef I please, —  
But when I 'm jokin', no, I thankee;  
Then, 'fore I know it, my ideas  
Run helter-skelter into Yankee.

Sence I begun to scribble rhyme,  
 I tell ye wut, I hain't ben foolin' ;  
 The parson's books, life, death, an' time  
 Hev took some trouble with my  
 schoolin' ;  
 Nor th' airth don't git put out with me,  
 Thet love her 'z though she wuz a  
 woman ;  
 Why, th' ain't a bird upon the tree  
 But half forgives my bein' human.

An' yit I love th' unhighschool'd way  
 Ol' farmers hed when I wuz younger ;  
 Their talk wuz meatier, an' 'ould stay,  
 While book-froth seems to whet your  
 hunger ;  
 For puttin' in a downright lick  
 'twixt Humbug's eyes, ther' 's few  
 can metch it,  
 An' then it helms my thoughts ez slick  
 Ez stret-grained hickory doos a  
 hetchet.

But when I can't, I can't, thet's all,  
 For Natur' won't put up with gullin' ;  
 Idees you hev to shove an' haul  
 Like a druv pig ain't wuth a mullein :  
 Live thoughts ain't sent for ; thru all  
 rifts  
 O' sense they pour an' resh ye on-  
 wards,  
 Like rivers when south-lyin' drifts  
 Feel thet th' old airth 's a-wheelin'  
 sunwards.

Time wuz, the rhymes come crowdin'  
 thick  
 Ez office-seekers arter 'lection,  
 An' into ary place 'ould stick  
 Without no bother nor objection ;  
 But sence the war my thoughts hang  
 back  
 Ez though I wanted to enlist 'em,  
 An' subs'tutes, — *they* don't never lack,  
 But then they'll slope afore you 've  
 mist 'em.

Nethin' don't seem like wut it wuz ;  
 I can't see wut there is to hender,  
 An' yit my brains jes' go buzz, buzz,  
 Like bumblebees agin a winder ;  
 'fore these times come, in all airth's  
 row,  
 Ther' wuz one quiet place, my head in,  
 Where I could hide an' think, — but  
 now  
 It's all one teeter, hopin', dreadin'.

Where's Peace? I start, some clear-  
 blown night,  
 When gaunt stone walls grow numb  
 an' number,  
 An', creakin' 'cross the snow-crus' white,  
 Walk the col' starlight into summer ;  
 Up grows the moon, an' swell by swell  
 Thru the pale pasturs silvers dimmer  
 Than the last smile thet strives to tell  
 O' love gone heavenward in its shim-  
 mer.

I hev ben gladder o' sech things  
 Than cocks o' spring or bees o' clover,  
 They filled my heart with livin' springs,  
 But now they seem to freeze 'em over ;  
 Sights innercent ez babes on knee,  
 Peaceful ez eyes o' pastur'd cattle,  
 Jes' coz they be so, seem to me  
 To rile me more with thoughts o'  
 battle.

In-doors an' out by spells I try ;  
 Ma'am Natur' keeps her spin-wheel  
 goin',  
 But leaves my natur' stiff and dry  
 Ez fiel's o' clover arter mowin' ;  
 An' her jes' keepin' on the same,  
 Calmer 'n a clock, an' never carin',  
 An' findin' nary thing to blame,  
 Is wus than ef she took to swearin'.

Snow-flakes come whisperin' on the  
 pane  
 The charm makes blazin' logs so  
 pleasant,  
 But I can't hark to wut they 're say'n',  
 With Grant or Sherman ollers pres-  
 ent ;  
 The chimbleys shudder in the gale,  
 Thet lulls, then suddin takes to flap-  
 pin'  
 Like a shot hawk, but all 's ez stale  
 To me ez so much sperit-rappin'.

Under the yaller-pines I house,  
 When sunshine makes 'em all sweet-  
 scented,  
 An' hear among their furry boughs  
 The baskin' west-wind purr con-  
 tented,  
 While 'way o'erhead, ez sweet an' low  
 Ez distant bells thet ring for meetin'  
 The wedged wil' geese their bugle  
 blow,  
 Further an' further South retreatin'.



Or up the slippery knob I strain  
 An' see a hundred hills like islan's  
 Lift their blue woods in broken chain  
 Out o' the sea o' snowy silence;  
 The farm-smokes, sweetes' sight on  
 airth,  
 Slow thru the winter air a-shrinkin'  
 Seem kin' o' sad, an' roun' the hearth  
 Of empty places set me thinkin'.

Beaver roars hoarse with meltin' snows,  
 An' rattles di'mon's from his granite;  
 Time wuz, he snatched away my prose,  
 An' into psalms or satires ran it;  
 But he, nor all the rest that once  
 Started my blood to country-dances,  
 Can't set me goin' more 'n a dunce  
 That hain't no use for dreams an'  
 fancies.

Rat-tat-tat-tattle thru the street  
 I hear the drummers makin' riot,  
 An' I set thinkin' o' the feet  
 That follered once an' now are quiet,—  
 White feet ez snowdrops innercent,  
 That never knowed the paths o' Satan,  
 Whose comin' step ther' 's ears that  
 won't,  
 No, not lifelong, leave off awaitin'.

Why, hain't I held 'em on my knee?  
 Did n't I love to see 'em growin',  
 Three likely lads ez wal could be,  
 Hahnsome an' brave an' not tu  
 knowin'?  
 I set an' look into the blaze  
 Whose natur', jes' like theim, keeps  
 climbin',  
 Ez long 'z it lives, in shinin' ways,  
 An' half despise myself for rhymin'.

Wut's words to them whose faith an'  
 truth  
 On War's red techstone rang true  
 metal,

Who ventered life an' love an' youth  
 For the gret prize o' death in battle?  
 To him who, deadly hurt, agen  
 Flashed on afore the charge's thunder,  
 Tippin' with fire the bolt of men  
 That rived the Rebel line asunder?

T ain't right to hev the young go fust,  
 All throbbin' full o' gifts an' graces,  
 Leavin' life's paupers dry ez dust  
 To try an' make b'lieve fill their  
 places:

Nothin' but tells us wut we miss,  
 Ther' 's gaps our lives can't never fay  
 in,  
 An' *thet* world seems so fur from this  
 Lef' for us loafers to grow gray in!

My eyes cloud up for rain; my mouth  
 Will take to twitchin' roun' the eor-  
 ners;

I pity mothers, tu, down South,  
 For all they sot among the scornors:  
 I'd sooner take my chance to stan'  
 At Judgment where your meaneas't  
 slave is,  
 Than at God's bar hol' up a han'  
 Ez drippin' red ez yourn, Jeff Davis!

Come, Peace! not like a mourner bowed  
 For honor lost an' dear ones wasted,  
 But proud, to meet a people proud,  
 With eyes thet tell o' triumph tasted!  
 Come, with han' grippin' on the hilt,  
 An' step thet proves ye Victory's  
 daughter!

Longin' for you, our sperits wilt  
 Like shipwrecked men's on raf's for  
 water.

Come, while our country feels the lift  
 Of a gret instinct shoutin' forwards,  
 An' knows thet freedom ain't a gift  
 Thet tarries long in han's o' cowards!  
 Come, sech ez mothers prayed for, when  
 They kissed their cross with lips thet  
 quivered,  
 An' bring fair wages for brave men,  
 A nation saved, a race delivered!

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No. XL

MR. HOSEA BIGLOW'S SPEECH IN  
 MARCH MEETING.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ATLANTIC  
 MONTHLY.

JAALAM, April 5, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR,—

(an' noticin' by your kiver thet you 're  
 some dearer than wut you wuz, I enclose  
 the deffrence) I dunno ez I know jest how  
 to interdroce this las' perduction of my  
 mews, ez Parson Willber allus called 'em,  
 which is goin' to be the last an' *stay* the  
 last onless sunthin' pertikler sh'd interfear  
 which I don't expec' ner I wun't yield tu

ef it wuz ez pressin' ez a deppity Shirriff. Sence Mr. Wilbur's disease I hev n't hed no one that could dror out my talons. He ust to kind o' wine me up an' set the penderlum agoin' an' then somehow I seemed to go on tick as it wear tell I run down, but the noo minister ain't of the same brewin' nor I can't seem to git ahold of no kine of huming nater in him but sort of slide rite off as you du on the eedge of a mow. Minnysteril natur is wal enough an' a site better 'n most other kines I know on, but the other suth sech as Welbor hed wuz of the Lord's makin' an' naterally more wonderle an' sweet tastin' leastways to me so fur as heard from. He used to interdooce 'em smooth ez ile athout sayin' nothin' in pertickler an' I misdoubt he did n't set so much by the sec'nd Ceres as wut he done by the Fust, fact, he let on onct that his mine misgive him of a sort of fallin' off in spots. He wuz as outspoken as a norwester he wuz, but I tole him I hoped the fall wuz from so high up that a feller could ketch a good many times fust afore comin' bunt onto the ground as I see Jethro C. Swett from the meetin' house steeple up to th' old perrish, an' took up for dead but he's alive now an' spry as wut you be. Turnin' of it over I reclected how they ust to put wut they called Argymunce onto the frunts of poyms, like poorches afore housen where you could rest ye a spell whilst you wuz concludin' whether you 'd go in or nut espheshully ware tha wuz darters, though I most allus found it the best plan to go in fust an' think afterwards an' the gals likes it best tu. I dno as speechis ever hez any argimunts to 'em, I never see none that hed an' I guess they never du but tha must allus be a B'ginnin' to everythin' athout it is Eternity so I 'll begin rite away an' anybody may put it afore any of his speeches of it soots an' welcome. I don't claim no paytent.

#### THE ARGYMUNT.

Interducshin, w'ich may be skipt. Begins by talkin' about himself: thet's jest natur an' most gin'allly allus pleasin', I b'leeve I've notist, to *one* of the company, an' thet's more than wut you can say of most speshes of talkin'. Nex' comes the gittin' the goodwill of the orjunge by lettin' 'em gather from wut you kind of ex'tentionally let drop thet they air about East, A one, an' no mistaik, skare 'em up an' take 'em as they rise. Spring interdooced with a flew approput flours. Speech finally begins witch nobuddy need n't feel obolygated to read as I never read 'em an'

never shell this one ag'in. Subjick staited; expanded; delayed; extended. Pump lively. Subjick staited ag'in so 's to avide all mistaiks. Ginnle remarks; continooed; kerried on; pushed furdur; kind o' gin out. Subjick *re-staited*; dielooted; stirred up permiscoous. Pump ag'in. Gits back to where he sot out. Can't seem to stay thair. Ketches into Mr. Seaward's hair. Breaks loose ag'in an' stait his subjick; stretches it; turns it; folds it; onfolds it; folds it ag'in so 's 't no one can't find it. Argoos with an imedjinary bean thet ain't aloud to say nothin' in re-pleye. Gives him a real good dreslin' an' is settyside he 's rite. Gits into Johnson's hair. No use tryin' to git into his head. Gives it up. Hez to stait his subjick ag'in; doos it back'ards, sideways, eendways, criss-cross, bevellin', noways. Gits finally red on it. Concluds. Concluds more. Reads some xtrax. Sees his subjick a-nosin' round arter him ag'in. Tries to avide it. Wun't du. *Misstates* it. Can't conjectur' no other plawsable way of staytin' on it. Tries pump. No fx. Finely concluds to conclud. Yeels the flore.

You kin spall an' punctooate thet as you please. I allus do, it kind of puts a noo soot of close onto a word, thiser fun-attick spellin' doos an' takes 'em out of the prissen dress they wair in the Dixonary. Ef I squeeze the cents out of 'em it 's the main thing, an' wut they wuz made for; wut 's left 's jest pummis.

Mistur Wilbur sez he to me onct, sez he, "Hosee," sez he, "in litterytoor the only good thing is Natur. It 's amazin' hard to come at," sez he, "but onct git it an' you've got everythin'. Wut 's the sweetest small on airth?" sez he. "Noo-mone hay," sez I, pooty bresk, for he wuz allus hankerin' round in hayin'. "Nawthin' of the kine," sez he. "My leetle Huldy's breath," sez I ag'in. "You're a good lad," sez he, his eyes sort of ripplin' like, for he lost a babe onct nigh about her age, — "you're a good lad; but 't ain't thet nuther," sez he. "Ef you want to know," sez he, "open your winder of a mornin' et ary season, and you 'll larn thet thet best of perfooms is jest fresh air, *fresh air*," sez he, emphysizin', "athout no mixtur. Thet's wut I call natur in writin', and it bathes my lungs and washes 'em sweet whenever I git a whiff on 't," sez he. I offen think o' thet when I set down to write, but the winders air *so ept* to git stuck, an' breakin' a pane costs sunthin'.

Yourn for the last time,

Nut to be continooed,

HOSEA BIGLOW.

I don't much s'pose, hows'ever I should  
 plen it,  
 I could git boosted into th' House or  
 Sennit,—  
 Nut while the twolegged gab-machine's  
 so plenty,  
 'nablin' one man to du the talk o'  
 twenty;  
 I'm one o' them that finds it ruther  
 hard:  
 To mannyfactur' wisdom by the yard,  
 An' maysure off, accordin' to demand,  
 The piece-goods el'kence that I keep on  
 hand,  
 The same ole pattern runnin' thru an'  
 thru,  
 An' nothin' but the customer that's  
 new.  
 I sometimes think, the furdur on I go,  
 That it gits harder to feel sure I know,  
 An' when I've settled my idees, I find  
 't warn't I sheered most in makin' up  
 my mind;  
 't wuz this an' that an' t' other thing  
 thet done it,  
 Sunthin' in th' air, I could n' seek nor  
 shun it.  
 Mos' folks go off so quick now in dis-  
 cussion,  
 All th' ole flint locks seems altered to  
 percussion,  
 Whilst I in agin' sometimes git a hint,  
 Thet I'm percussion changin' back to  
 flint;  
 Wal, ef it's so, I ain't agoin' to werrit,  
 For th' ole Queen's-arm hez this pertickler  
 merit,—  
 It gives the mind a hahnsome wedth o'  
 margin  
 To kin' o' make its will afore dischargin':  
 I can't make out but jest one ginnle  
 rule,—  
 No man need go an' *make* himself a fool,  
 Nor jedgment ain't like mutton, thet  
 can't bear  
 Cookin' tu long, nor be took up tu rare.  
 Ez I wuz say'n, I hain't no chance to  
 speak  
 So's 't all the country dreads me onct a  
 week,  
 But I've consid'ble o' thet sort o' head  
 Thet sets to home an' thinks wut *might*  
 be said,  
 The sense thet grows an' werrits under-  
 neath,  
 Comin' belated like your wisdom-teeth,

An' git so el'kent, sometimes, to my  
 gardin  
 Thet I don' vally public life a fardin'.  
 Our Parson Wilbur (blessin's on his  
 head!)  
 'mongst other stories of ole times he hed,  
 Talked of a feller thet rehearsed his  
 spreads  
 Beforehan' to his rows o' kebbige-heads,  
 (Ef 't war n't Demossenes, I guess 't wuz  
 Sisro,)  
 Appealin' fust to thet an' then to this  
 row,  
 Accordin' ez he thought thet his idees  
 Their diff'runt ev'riges o' brains 'ould  
 please;  
 "An'," sez the Parson, "to hit right,  
 you must  
 Git used to maysurin' your hearers fust;  
 For, take my word for 't, when all's  
 come an' past,  
 The kebbige-heads 'll cair the day et  
 last;  
 Th' ain't ben a meetin' sence the worl'  
 begun  
 But they made (raw or biled ones) ten  
 to one."

I've allus foun' 'em, I allow, sence then  
 About ez good for talkin' to ez men;  
 They 'll take edvice, like other folks, to  
 keep,  
 (To use it 'ould be holdin' on 't tu  
 cheap,)  
 They listen wal, don' kick up when you  
 scold 'em,  
 An' ef they've tongues, hev sense enough  
 to hold 'em;  
 Though th' ain't no denger we shall lose  
 the breed,  
 I gin'lly keep a score or so for seed,  
 An' when my sappiness gits spry in  
 spring,  
 So's 't my tongue itches to run on full  
 swing,  
 I fin' 'em ready-planted in March-  
 meetin',  
 Warm ez a ly'ceum-audience in their  
 greetin',  
 An' pleased to hear my spoutin' frum  
 the fence,—  
 Comin', ez 't doos, entirely free 'f ex-  
 pense.  
 This year I made the follerin' observa-  
 tions  
 Extrump'ry, like most other tri'ls o'  
 patience,



An', no reporters bein' sent express  
 To work their abstrac's up into a mess  
 Ez like th' oridg'nal ez a woodcut pictur'  
 Thet chokes the life out like a boy-con-  
 strictor,  
 I've writ 'em out, an' so avide all  
 jeal'sies  
 'twixt nonsense o' my own an' some  
 one's else's.

(N. B. Reporters gin'lly git a hint  
 To make dull orjunces seem 'live in  
 print,  
 An', ez I hev t' report myself, I vum,  
 I'll put th' applauses where they 'd  
 ough' to come !)

MY FELLER KEBBIGE-HEADS, who look  
 so green,  
 I vow to gracious thet ef I could dreen  
 The world of all its hearers but jest you,  
 't would leave 'bout all tha' is wuth  
 talkin' to,  
 An' you, my ven'able ol' frien's, thet show  
 Upon your crowns a sprinklin' o' March  
 snow,  
 Ez ef mild Time had christened every  
 sense  
 For wisdom's church o' second innocence,  
 Nut Age's winter, no, no sech a thing,  
 But jest a kin' o' slippin'-back o'  
 spring, — [Sev'ril noses blowed.]  
 We've gathered here, ez ushle, to decide  
 Which is the Lord's an' which is Satan's  
 side,  
 Coz all the good or evil thet can heppen  
 Is 'long o' which on 'em you choose for  
 Cappen. [Cries o' "Thet's so!"]

'Aprul's come back ; the swellin' buds of  
 oak  
 Dim the fur hillsides with a purplish  
 smoke ;  
 The brooks are loose an', singing to be  
 seen,  
 (Like gals,) make all the hollers soft an'  
 green ;  
 The birds are here, for all the season's  
 late ;  
 They take the sun's height an' don'  
 never wait ;  
 Soon 'z he officially declares it's spring  
 Their light hearts lift 'em on a north-  
 'ard wing,  
 An' th' ain't an acre, fur ez you can hear,  
 Can't by the music tell the time o' year ;  
 But thet white dove Carliny scared away,

Five year ago, jes' sech an Aprul day ;  
 Peace, that we hoped 'ould come an'  
 build last year  
 An' coo by every housedoor, is n't  
 here, —  
 No, nor wun't never be, for all our jaw,  
 Till we're ez brave in pol'tics ez in war !  
 O Lord, ef folks wuz made so 's 't they  
 could see  
 The begnet-pint there is to an idee !

[Sensation.]  
 Ten times the danger in 'em th' is in  
 steel ;  
 They run your soul thru an' you never  
 feel,  
 But crawl about an' seem to think  
 you 're livin',  
 Poor shells o' men, nut wuth the Lord's  
 forgivin',  
 Tell you come bunt ag'in a real live feet,  
 An' go to pieces when you 'd ough' to  
 eet !  
 Thet kin' o' begnet's wut we 're crossin'  
 now,  
 An' no man, fit to nevgigate a scow,  
 'ould stan' expectin' help from Kingdom  
 Come,  
 While t' other side druv their cold iron  
 home.

My frien's, you never gathered from my  
 mouth,  
 No, nut one word ag'in the South ez  
 South,  
 Nor th' ain't a livin' man, white, brown,  
 nor black,  
 Gladder 'n wut I should be to take 'em  
 back ;  
 But all I ask of Uncle Sam is fust  
 To write up on his door, "No goods on  
 trust" ;  
 [Cries of "Thet's the ticket !"]  
 Give us cash down in ekle laws for all,  
 An' they 'll be snug inside afore nex' fall.  
 Give wut they ask, an' we shell hev  
 Jamaker,  
 Wuth minus some consid'able an acre ;  
 Give wut they need, an' we shell git  
 'fore long  
 A nation all one piece, rich, peacefle,  
 strong ;  
 Make 'em Amerikin, an' they 'll begin  
 To love their country ez they loved their  
 sin ;  
 Let 'em stay Southun, an' you 've kep'  
 a sore  
 Ready to fester ez it done afore.

No mortle man can boast of perfic' vision,  
 But the one moleblin' thing is Inde-  
 cision,  
 An' th' ain't no futur' for the man nor  
 state  
 Thet out of j-u-s-t can't spell great.  
 Some folks 'ould call thet reddikle; do  
 you?  
 'T was commonsense afore the war wuz  
 thru;  
 Thet loaded all our guns an' made 'em  
 speak  
 So 's 't Europe heard 'em clearn acrost  
 the creek;  
 "They're drivin' o' their spiles down  
 now," sez she,  
 "To the hard grennit o' God's fust  
 idee;  
 Ef they reach thet, Democ'cy need n't  
 fear  
 The tallest airthquakes *we* can git up  
 here."  
 Some call 't insultin' to ask *any* pledge,  
 An' say 't will only set their teeth on  
 edge,  
 But folks you've jest licked, fur 'z I  
 ever see,  
 Are 'bout ez mad 'z they wal know how  
 to be;  
 It's better than the Rebs themselves  
 expected  
 'fore they see Uncle Sam wilt down  
 henpected;  
 Be kind 'z you please, but fustly make  
 things fast,  
 For plain Truth's all the kindness thet  
 'll last;  
 Ef treason is a crime, ez *some* folks say,  
 How could we punish it a milder way  
 Than sayin' to 'em, "Brethren, lookee  
 here,  
 We'll jes' divide things with ye, sheer  
 an' sheer,  
 An sence both come o' pooty strong-  
 backed daddies,  
 You take the Darkies, ez we've took  
 the Paddies;  
 Ign'ant an' poor we took 'em by the  
 hand,  
 An' they're the bones an' sinners o' the  
 land."  
 I ain't o' them thet fancy there's a loss  
 on  
 Every inves'tment thet don't start from  
 Bos'on;  
 But I know this: our money's safest  
 trusted

In sunthin', come wut will, thet *can't*  
 be busted,  
 An' thet 's the old Amerikin idee,  
 To make a man a Man an' let him be.  
 Ez for their l'yalty, don't take a goad  
 to 't,  
 But I do' want to block their only road  
 to 't  
 By lettin' 'em believe thet they can git  
 Mor'n wut they lost, out of our little  
 wit:  
 I tell ye wut, I 'm 'fraid we'll drif' to  
 leeward  
 'thout we can put more stiffenin' into  
 Seward;  
 He seems to think Columby 'd better ect  
 Like a scared widder with a boy stiff-  
 necked  
 Thet stomps an' swears he wun't come  
 in to supper;  
 She mus' set up for him, ez weak ez  
 Tupper,  
 Keepin' the Constitootion on to warm,  
 Tell he'll except her 'pologies in form:  
 The neighbors tell her he's a cross-  
 grained cuss  
 Thet needs a hidin' 'fore he comes to  
 wus;  
 "No," sez Ma Seward, "he's ez good  
 'z the best,  
 All he wants now is sugar-plums an'  
 rest";  
 "He sarsed my Pa," sez one; "He  
 stoned my son,"  
 Another edds. "O, wal, 't wuz jest his  
 fun."  
 "He tried to shoot our Uncle Samwell  
 dead."  
 "'T wuz only tryin' a noo gun he hed."  
 "Wal, all we ask 's to hev it understood  
 You'll take his gun away from him for  
 good;  
 We don't, wal, nut exac'ly, like his  
 play,  
 Seein' he allus kin' o' shoots our way.  
 You kill your fatted calves to no good  
 eend,  
 'thout his fust sayin', 'Mother, I hev  
 sinned!'"  
 ["Amen!" from Deac'n Greenleaf.]  
 The Pres'dunt *he* thinks thet the slick-  
 est plan  
 'ould be t' allow thet he's our on'y  
 man,  
 An' thet we fit thru all thet drestle war

Jes' for his private glory an' eclor ;  
 "Nobody ain't a Union man," sez he,  
 "'thout he agrees, thru thick an' thin,  
 with me ;  
 War n't Andrew Jackson's 'nitals jes'  
 like mine ?  
 An' ain't thet sunthin like a right  
 divine  
 To cut up ez kentenkerous ez I please,  
 An' treat your Congress like a nest o'  
 fleas ?"  
 Wal, I expec' the People would n'  
 care, if  
 The question now wuz techin' bank or  
 tariff,  
 But I conclude they've 'bout made up  
 their mind  
 This ain't the fittest time to go it blind,  
 Nor these ain't metters thet with pol-  
 'tics swings,  
 But goes 'way down amongst the roots  
 o' things ;  
 Coz Sumner talked o' whitewashin' one  
 day  
 They wun't let four years' war be throwed  
 away.  
 "Let the South hev her rights ?" They  
 say, "Thet's you !  
 But nut greb hold of other folks's tu."  
 Who owns this country, is it they or  
 Andy ?  
 Leastways it ough' to be the People *and*  
 he ;  
 Let him be senior pardner, ef he's so,  
 But let them kin' o' smuggle in ez Co ;  
 [Laughter.]  
 Did he diskiver it ? Consid'ble numbers  
 Think thet the job wuz taken by Co-  
 lumbus.  
 Did he set tu an' make it wut it is ?  
 Ef so, I guess the One-Man-power *hez*  
 riz.  
 Did he put thru the rebbles, clear the  
 docket,  
 An' pay th' expenses out of his own  
 pocket ?  
 Ef thet's the case, then everythin' I  
 exes  
 Is t' hev him come an' pay my ennoal  
 texes. [Profound sensation.]  
 Was't he thet shou'dered all them mil-  
 lion guns ?  
 Did he lose all the fathers, brothers,  
 sons ?  
 Is this ere pop'lar gov'ment thet we  
 run  
 A kin' o' sulky, made to kerry one ?

An' is the country goin' to knuckle  
 down  
 To hev Smith sort their letters 'stid o'  
 Brown ?  
 Who wuz the 'Nited States 'fore Rich-  
 mon' fell ?  
 Wuz the South needfle their full name  
 to spell ?  
 An' can't we spell it in thet short-han'  
 way  
 Till th' underpinnin' 's settled so 's to  
 stay ?  
 Who cares for the Resolves of '61,  
 Thet tried to coax an airthquake with a  
 bun ?  
 Hez act'ly nothin' taken place sence  
 then  
 To larn folks they must hendle facts  
 like men ?  
 Ain't *this* the true p'int ? Did the Rebs  
 accep' 'em ?  
 Ef nut, whose fault is 't thet we hev n't  
 kep' 'em ?  
 War n't there *two* sides ? an' don't it  
 stend to reason  
 Thet this week's 'Nited States ain't las'  
 week's treason ?  
 When all these sums is done, with  
 nothin' missed,  
 An' nut afore, this school 'll be dis-  
 missed.  
 I knowed ez wal ez though I'd seen 't  
 with eyes  
 Thet when the war wuz over copper'd  
 rise,  
 An' thet we'd hev a rile-up in our  
 kettle  
 't would need Leviathan's whole skin  
 to settle :  
 I thought 't would take about a genera-  
 tion  
 'fore we could wal begin to be a nation,  
 But I allow I never did imagine  
 't would be our Pres'dunt thet 'ould  
 drive a wedge in  
 To keep the split from closin' of it could,  
 An' healin' over with new wholesome  
 wood ;  
 For th' ain't no chance o' healin' while  
 they think  
 Thet law an' gov'ment's only printer's  
 ink ;  
 I mus' confess I thank him for dis-  
 coverin'  
 The curus way in which the States are  
 sovereign ;



They ain't nut *quite* enough so to rebel,  
But, when they fin' it's costly to raise  
h—, [A groan from Deac'n G.]

Why, then, for jes' the same superl'tive  
reason,

They 're 'most too much so to be tetch'd  
for treason ;

They *can't* go out, but ef they somehow  
*du*,

Their sovereignty don't noways go out  
tu ;

The State goes out, the sovereignty don't  
stir,

But stays to keep the door ajar for her.  
He thinks secession never took 'em out,  
An' mebbly he 's correc', but I misdoubt ;  
Ef they war n't out, then why, 'n the  
name o' sin,

Make all this row 'bout lettin' of 'em  
in ?

In law, p'r'aps nut ; but there 's a dif-  
ference, ruther,

Betwixt your mother-'n-law an' real  
mother. [Derisive cheers.]

An' I, for one, shall wish they 'd all  
been *som'eres*,

Long 'z U. S. Texes are sech reg'lar  
corners.

But, O my patience ! must we wriggle  
back

Into th' ole crooked, pettyfoggin' track,  
When our artil'ry-wheels a road hev cut  
Stret to our purpose ef we keep the rut ?  
War 's jes' dead waste excep' to wipe the  
slate

Clean for the cyph'rin' of some nobler  
fate. [Applause.]

Ez for dependin' on their oaths an' thet,  
't wun't bind 'em mor 'n the ribbin  
roun' my het ;

I heard a fable once from Othniel  
Starns,

That pints it slick ez weathercocks do  
barns :

Onct on a time the wolves hed certing  
rights

Inside the fold ; they used to sleep there  
nights.

An', bein' cousins o' the dogs, they took  
Their turns et watchin', reg'lar ez a  
book ;

But somehow, when the dogs hed gut  
asleep,

Their love o' mutton beat their love o'  
sheep,

Till gradilly the shepherds come to see

Things war n't agoin' ez they 'd ough'  
to be ;

So they sent off a deacon to remonstrate  
Along 'th the wolves an' urge 'em to go  
on straight ;

They did n' seem to set much by the  
deacon,

Nor preachin' did n' cow 'em, nut to  
speak on ;

Fin'ly they swore thet they 'd go out an'  
stay,

An' hev their fill o' mutton every day ;  
Then dogs an' shepherds, after much  
hard dammin',

[Groan from Deac'n G.]  
Turned tu an' give 'em a tormented  
lammin',

An' sez, "Ye sha' n't go out, the mur-  
rain rot ye,

To keep us wastin' half our time to watch  
ye !"

But then the question come, How live  
together

'thout losin' sleep, nor nary yew nor  
wether ?

Now there wuz some dogs (noways wuth  
their keep)

That sheered their cousins' tastes an'  
sheered the sheep ;

They sez, "Be gin'rous, let 'em swear  
right in,

An', ef they backslide, let 'em swear  
ag'in ;

Jes' let 'em put on sheep-skins whilst  
they 're swearin' ;

To ask for more 'ould be beyond all  
bearin'."

"Be gin'rous for yourselves, where *you*  
're to pay,

Thet 's the best prectice," sez a shep-  
herd gray ;

"Ez for their oaths they wun't be wuth  
a button,

Long 'z you don't cure 'em o' their taste  
for mutton ;

Th' ain't but one solid way, howe'er you  
puzzle :

Tell they 're convarted, let 'em wear a  
muzzle." [Cries of "Bully for you !"]

I've noticed thet each half-baked  
scheme's abettors

Are in the hebbit o' produc'in' letters  
Writ by all sorts o' never-heard-on  
fellers,

'bout ez oridge'nal ez the wind in bel-  
lers ;

I've noticed, tu, it's the quack med'-  
cine gits

(An' needs) the grettest heaps o' stiffy-  
kits; [Two apothekerries goes out.]

Now, sence I lef' off creepin' on all fours,  
I hain't ast no man to endorse my course;  
It's full ez cheap to be your own endor-  
ser,

An' ef I've made a cup, I'll fin' the  
saucer;

But I've some letters here from t' other  
side,

An' them's the sort that helps me to  
decide;

Tell me for wut the copper-comp'nies  
hanker,

An' I'll tell you jest where it's safe to  
anchor. [Faint hiss.]

Fus'ly the Hon'ble B. O. Sawin writes  
Thet for a spell he could n' sleep o'  
nights,

Puzzlin' which side wuz prudentest to  
pin to,

Which wuz th' ole homestead, which the  
temp'ry leanto;

Et fust he jedged 't would right-side-up  
his pan

To come out ez a 'ridge'nal Union man,  
"But now," he sez, "I ain't nut quite  
so fresh;

The winnin' horse is goin' to be Secesh;  
You might, las' spring, hev eas'ly walked  
the course,

'fore we contrived to doctor th' Union  
horse;

Now *we* 're the ones to walk aroun' the  
nex' track:

Jest you take hold an' read the follerin'  
extrac',

Out of a letter I received last week  
From an ole frien' thet never sprung a  
leak,

A Nothun Dem'crat o' th' ole Jarsey  
blue,

Born copper-sheathed an' copper-fastened  
tu.

"These four years past it hez been tough  
To say which side a feller went for;

Guideposts all gone, roads muddy 'n'  
rough,

An' nothin' duin' wut 't wuz meant for;  
Pickets a-firin' left an' right,

Both sides a lettin' rip et sight, —  
Life war n't wuth hardly payin' rent for.

"Columby gut her back up so,  
It war n't no use a-tryin' to stop her, —

War's emptin's riled her very dough  
An' made it rise an' act improper;  
't wuz full ez much ez I could du  
To jes' lay low an' worry thru,  
'thout hev'in' to sell out my copper.

"Afore the war your mod'rit men  
Could set an' sun 'em on the fences,  
Cyph'rin' the chances up, an' then  
Jump off which way bes' paid expenses;  
Sence, 't wuz so resky ary way,  
I did n't hardly darst to say  
I 'greed with Paley's Evidences.

[Groan from Deac'n G.]

"Ask Mac ef tryin' to set the fence  
War n't like bein' rid upon a rail on 't,  
Headin' your party with a sense  
O' bein' tipjint in the tail on 't,  
An' tryin' to think thet, on the whole,  
You kin' o' quasi own your soul  
When Belmont's gut a bill o' sale on 't!

[Three cheers for Grant and Sherman.]

"Come peace, I sposed thet folks 'ould  
like

Their pol'tics done ag'in by proxy  
Give their noo loves the bag an' strike  
A fresh trade with their reg'lar doxy;  
But the drag's broke, now slavery's  
gone,

An' there's gret resk they 'll blunder on,  
Ef they ain't stopped, to real Democ'cy.

"We've gut an awful row to hoe  
In this 'ere job o' reconstructin';  
Folks dunno skurce which way to go,  
Where th' ain't some boghole to be  
ducked in;

But one thing's clear; there *is* a crack,  
Ef we pry hard, 'twixt white an' black,  
Where the ole makebate can be tucked  
in.

"No white man sets in airth's broad  
aisle

Thet I ain't willin' t' own ez brother,  
An' ef he's heppened to strike ile,  
I dunno, fin'ly, but I'd ruther;  
An' Paddies, long 'z they vote all right,  
Though they ain't jest a nat'ral white,  
I hold one on 'em good 'z another.

[Applause.]

"Wut *is* there lef' I'd like to know,  
Ef 't ain't the difference o' color,

To keep up self-respec' an' show  
The human natur' of a fullah?  
Wut good in bein' white, unless  
It's fixed by law, nut lef' to guess,  
We're a heap smarter an' they duller?

"Ef we're to hev our ekle rights,  
't wun't du to 'low no competition;  
Th' ole debt doo us for bein' whites  
Ain't safe unless we stop th' emission  
O' these noo notes, whose specie base  
Is human natur', 'thout no trace  
O' shape, nor color, nor condition.  
[Continood applause.]

"So fur I'd writ an' could n' jedge  
Aboard wut boat I'd best take pessige,  
My brains all mincemeat, 'thout no  
edge  
Upon 'em more than tu a sessige,  
But now it seems ez though I see  
Sunthin' resemblin' an idee,  
Sence Johnson's speech an' veto mes-  
sage.

"I like the speech best, I confess,  
The logic, preudence, an' good taste  
on 't,  
An' it's so mad, I ruther guess  
There's some dependence to be placed  
on 't; [Laughter.]  
It's narrer, but 'twixt you an' me,  
Out o' the allies o' J. D.  
A temp'ry party can be based on 't.

"Jes' to hold on till Johnson's thru  
An' dug his Presidential grave is,  
An' then /—who knows but we could  
slew  
The country roun' to put in ——?  
Wun't some folks rare up when we pull  
Out o' their eyes our Union wool  
An' larn 'em wut a p'lit'cle shave is!

"Oh, did it seem 'z ef Providence  
Could ever send a second Tyler?  
To see the South all back to once,

Reapin' the spiles o' the Freesiler,  
Is cute ez 'thout an ingineer  
Should claim th' old iron for his sheer  
Coz 't was himself that bust the biler!"  
[Gret laughter.]

Thet tells the story! Thet's wut we  
shall git  
By tryin' squirtguns on the burnin' Pit;  
For the day never comes when it 'll du  
To kick off' Dooty like a worn-out shoe.  
I seem to hear a whisperin' in the air,  
A sighin' like, of unconsolated despair,  
Thet comes from nowhere an' from  
everywhere,  
An' seems to say, "Why died we? war  
n't it, then,  
To settle, once for all, thet men wuz  
men?  
Oh, airth's sweet cup snatched from us  
barely tasted,  
The grave's real chill is feelin' life wuz  
wasted!  
Oh, you we lef', long-lingerin' et the  
door,  
Lovin' you best, coz we loved Her the  
more,  
Thet Death, not we, had conquered, we  
should feel  
Ef she upon our memory turned her  
heel,  
An' unregretful throwed us all away  
To flaunt it in a Blind Man's Holiday!"

My frien's, I've talked nigh on to long  
enough.  
I hain't no call to bore ye coz ye're  
tough;  
My lungs are sound, an' our own v'ice  
delights  
Our ears, but even kebbige-heads hez  
rights.  
It's the las' time thet I shell e'er ad-  
dress ye,  
But you 'll soon fin' some new torment-  
or: bless ye!  
[Tumult'ous applause and cries of "Go on!"  
"Don't stop!"]



## NOTES.

I AM indebted to Mr. Frank Beverly Williams for these illustrative notes.

### FIRST SERIES.

This series of the Biglow Papers relates to the Mexican War. It expresses the sentiment of New England, and particularly of Massachusetts, on that conflict, which in its aim and conduct had little of honor for the American Republic. The war was begun and prosecuted in the interest of Southern slaveholders. It was essential to the vitality of slavery that fresh fields should constantly be opened to it. Agriculture was almost the sole industry in which slaves could be profitably employed. That their labor should be wasteful and careless to preserve the productive powers of the soil was inevitable. New land was ever in demand, and the history of slavery in the United States is one long series of struggles for more territory. It was with this end in view that a colony of roving, adventurous Americans, settled in the thinly populated and poorly governed region now known as Texas, revolted from the Mexican government and secured admission to the Union, thus bringing on the war with Mexico. The Northern Whigs had protested against annexation, but after the war began, their resistance grew more and more feeble. In the vain effort to retain their large Southern constituent, they sacrificed justice to expediency and avoided an issue that would not be put down. The story of the Mexican War is the story of the gradual decline of the great Whig party, and of the growth of that organization, successively known as the Liberty, Free-Soil, and Republican party, whose policy was the exclusion of slavery from all new territory. One more victory was granted to the Whigs in 1848. After that their strength failed rapidly. Northern sentiment was being roused to a sense of righteous indignation by Southern aggressions and the fervid exhortations of Garrison and his co-workers in the anti-slavery cause. Few, however, followed Garrison into disloyalty to the Constitution. The greater number preferred to stay in the Union and use such lawful political means as were available for the restriction of slavery. Their wisdom was demonstrated by the election of Abraham Lincoln twelve years after the Mexican War closed.

Page 173. "*A cruel tin Sarjunt.*" The act of May 13, 1846, authorized President Polk to employ the militia, and call out 50,000 volunteers, if necessary. He immediately called for the full

number of volunteers, asking Massachusetts for 777 men. On May 26 Governor Briggs issued a proclamation for the enrollment of the regiment. As the President's call was merely a request and not an order, many Whigs and the Abolitionists were for refusing it. *The Liberator* for June 5 severely censured the governor for complying, and accused him of not carrying out the resolutions of the last Whig Convention, which had pledged the party "to present as firm a front of opposition to the institution as was consistent with their allegiance to the Constitution."

Page 174. "*Massachusetts . . . she's akneelin' . . .*" An allusion to the governor's call for troops (cf. note to p. 175) as well as to the vote on the War Bill. On May 11, 1846, the President sent to the House of Representatives his well-known message declaring the existence of war brought on "by the act of Mexico," and asking for a supply of \$10,000,000. Of the seven members from Massachusetts, all Whigs, two, Robert C. Winthrop, of Boston, and Amos Abbott, of Andover, voted for the bill. The Whigs throughout the country, remembering the fate of the party which had opposed the last war with England, sanctioned the measure as necessary for the preservation of the army, then in peril by the unauthorized acts of the President.

Page 175. "*Ha'n't they sold . . . env'ys w'iz?*" South Carolina, Louisiana, and several other Southern States at an early date passed acts to prevent free persons of color from entering their jurisdictions. These acts bore with particular severity upon colored seamen, who were imprisoned, fined, or whipped, and often sold into slavery. On the petition of the Massachusetts Legislature, Governor Briggs, in 1844, appointed Mr. Samuel Hoar agent to Charleston, and Mr. George Hubbard to New Orleans, to act on behalf of oppressed colored citizens of the Bay State. Mr. Hoar was expelled from South Carolina by order of the Legislature of that State, and Mr. Hubbard was forced by threats of violence to leave Louisiana. The obnoxious acts remained in force until after the Civil War.

Page 175. "*Go to work an' part.*" Propositions to secede were not uncommon in New England at this time. The rights of the States had been strongly asserted on the acquisition of Louisiana in 1803, and on the admission of the State of that name in 1812. Among the resolutions of the Massachusetts Legislature adopted in 1845, relative to the proposed annexation of Texas, was one declaring that "such an act of admission would have no binding force whatever on the people of Massachusetts."

John Quincy Adams, in a discourse before the New York Historical Society, in 1839, claimed a right for the States "to part in friendship with each other . . . when the fraternal spirit shall give way," etc. The Garrisonian wing of the Abolitionists notoriously advocated secession. There were several other instances of an expression of this sentiment, but for the most part they were not evoked by opposition to slavery.

Page 176. "*Hoorawin' in ole Funnel.*" The Massachusetts regiment, though called for May 13, 1846, was not mustered into the United States' service till late in January of the next year. The officers, elected January 5, 1847, were as follows: Caleb Cushing, of Newburyport, Colonel; Isaac H. Wright, of Roxbury, Lieutenant-Colonel; Edward W. Abbott, of Andover, Major. Shortly before the troops embarked for the South, on the evening of Saturday, January 23, 1847, a public meeting was held in Faneuil Hall, where an elegant sword was presented to Mr. Wright by John A. Bolles, on behalf of the subscribers. Mr. Bolles' speech on this occasion is the one referred to.

Page 176. "*Mister Bolles.*" Mr. John Augustus Bolles was the author of a prize essay on a *Congress of Nations*, published by the American Peace Society, an essay on *Usury and Usury Laws*, and of various articles in the *North American Review* and other periodicals. He was also the first editor of the *Boston Journal*. In 1843 he was Secretary of State for Massachusetts.

Page 176. *Rantoul*. Mr. Robert Rantoul (1805-1852), a prominent lawyer and a most accomplished gentleman, was at this time United States District Attorney for Massachusetts. In 1851 he succeeded Webster in the Senate, but remained there a short time only. He was a Representative in Congress from 1851 till his death. Although a Democrat, Mr. Rantoul was strongly opposed to slavery.

Page 176. "*Achokin' on 'em.*" Mr. Rantoul was an earnest advocate of the abolition of capital punishment. Public attention had recently been called to his views by some letters to Governor Briggs on the subject, written in February, 1846.

Page 178. "*Caleb.*" Caleb Cushing, of Newburyport, Colonel of the Massachusetts Regiment of Volunteers.

Page 179. "*Gubernatorial second.*" Cf. note to p. 173.

Page 180. "*Guvener B.*" George Nixon Briggs was the Whig Governor of Massachusetts from 1844 to 1851. The campaign referred to here is that of 1847. Governor Briggs was renominated by acclamation and supported by his party with great enthusiasm. His opponent was Caleb Cushing, then in Mexico, and raised by President Polk to the rank of Brigadier-General. Cushing was defeated by a majority of 14,060.

Page 180. "*John P. Robinson.*" John Paul Robinson (1799-1864) was a resident of Lowell, a lawyer of considerable ability, and a thorough classical scholar. He represented Lowell in the State Legislature in 1829, 1830, 1831, 1833, and 1842, and was Senator from Middlesex in 1836. Late in the gubernatorial contest of 1847 it was rumored that Robinson, heretofore a zealous Whig, and a delegate to the recent Springfield Convention, had gone over to the Democratic or, as it was then styled, the "Loco" camp. The editor of the *Boston Palladium* wrote to

him to learn the truth, and Robinson replied in an open letter avowing his intention to vote for Cushing.

Page 180. "*General C.*" General Caleb Cushing. Cf. note to p. 178.

Page 181. "*Our country, however bounded.*" Mr. R. C. Winthrop, M. C., in a speech at Faneuil Hall, July 4, 1845, said in deprecation of secession: "Our country—bounded by the St. John's and the Sabine, or however otherwise bounded or described, and be the measurements more or less—still our country—to be cherished in all our hearts, to be defended by all our hands." The sentiment was at once taken up and used effectively by the "Cotton" Whigs, those who inclined to favor the Mexican War.

Page 182. "*The Liberator.*" *The Liberator* was William Lloyd Garrison's anti-slavery paper, published from 1831 to 1865. The "heresies" of which Mr. Wilbur speaks were Garrison's advocacy of secession, his well-known and eccentric views on "no government," woman suffrage, etc.

Page 182. *Scott*. General W. Scott was mentioned as a possible Whig candidate for the Presidency in the summer of 1847, but was soon overshadowed by General Taylor.

Page 184. *J. G. Palfrey*. December 6, 1847, Mr. R. C. Winthrop, of Boston, the Whig candidate for Speaker of the House in the Thirtieth Congress, was elected after three ballots. Mr. John Gorham Palfrey, elected a Whig member from Boston, and Mr. Joshua Giddings, of Ohio, refused to vote for Winthrop, and remained firm to the last in spite of the intensity of public opinion in their party. The election of a Whig Speaker in a manner depended on their votes. Had they supported Winthrop, he could have been elected on the second ballot. At the third he could not have been elected without them had not Mr. Levin, a Native American member, changed his vote, and Mr. Holmes, a Democrat from South Carolina, left the hall. Mr. Palfrey refused to vote for Mr. Winthrop because he was assured the latter would not, through his power over the committees, exert his influence to arrest the war and obstruct the extension of slavery into new territory. So bold and decided a stand at so critical a time excited great indignation for a time among the "Cotton" Whigs of Boston.

Page 184. "*Springfield Convention.*" This convention was held September 29, 1847. The substance of the resolutions is given by Mr. Biglow.

Page 187. "*Monteery.*" Monterey, the capital of Nueva Leon, capitulated September 24, 1846, thus giving the United States' troops control over about two thirds of the territory and one tenth of the population of Mexico.

Page 187. "*Cherry Buster.*" August 20, 1847, General Scott stormed the heights of Churubusco, and completely routed the 30,000 Mexicans stationed there under Santa Anna. Scott could have entered the capital at once in triumph had he not preferred to delay for peace negotiations.

Page 187. "*The Tooleries.*" The French Revolution of 1848, which resulted in the deposition of Louis Philippe, was at this time impending.

Page 188. "*The Post.*" The *Boston Post*, a Democratic, or Loco newspaper.



Page 188. "*The Courier*." The *Boston Courier*, in which the Biglow Papers first appeared, was a "Conscience" Whig paper.

Page 189. "*Drayton and Sayres*." In April, 1848, an attempt was made to abduct seventy-seven slaves from Washington in the schooner Pearl, under the conduct of Captain Drayton and Sayres, or Sayers, his mate. The slaves were speedily recaptured and sold South, while their brave defenders barely escaped with their lives from an infuriated mob. The Abolitionists in Congress determined to evoke from that body some expression of sentiment on the subject. On the 20th of April Senator Hale introduced a resolution implying but not expressing sympathy with the oppressed. It stirred the slaveholders to unusual intemperance of language. Calhoun was "amazed that even the Senator from New Hampshire had so little regard for the Constitution," and, forgetting his usual dignity, declared he "would as soon argue with a maniac from Bedlam" as with Mr. Hale. Mr. Foote, of Mississippi, was, perhaps, the most violent of all. He denounced any attempt of Congress to legislate on the subject of slavery as "a nefarious attempt to commit grand larceny." He charged Mr. Hale with being "as guilty as if he had committed highway robbery," and went on to say, "I invite him to visit Mississippi, and will tell him beforehand, in all honesty, that he could not go ten miles into the interior before he would grace one of the tallest trees of the forest with a rope around his neck, with the approbation of all honest and patriotic citizens; and that, if necessary, I should myself assist in the operation."

Mr. Hale stood almost alone with his resolution, which was soon arrested by an adjournment. A similar resolution failed in the House.

Drayton and Sayres were convicted by the District Court and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. In 1852 Senator Sumner secured for them an unconditional pardon from President Fillmore.

Page 190. *Mr. Foote*. Cf. note above. Mr. Henry S. Foote was Senator from Mississippi from 1847 to 1852. He was a member of the Confederate Congress, and the author of *The War of the Rebellion*, and *Personal Recollections of Public Men*.

Page 190. *Mangum*. W. P. Mangum (1792-1861) was Senator from North Carolina from 1831 to 1837, and from 1841 to 1847. He was President *pro tem*. of the Senate during Tyler's administration, 1842-1845.

Page 190. *Cass*. Lewis Cass (1782-1866) was Jackson's Secretary of War from 1831 to 1836, Minister to France from 1836 to 1842, Senator from Michigan from 1845 to 1848, and candidate for the Presidency on the Democratic ticket in 1848. After his defeat by Taylor he was in 1849 returned to the Senate to fill out his unexpired term. He was Buchanan's Secretary of State until the famous message of December, 1860, when he resigned.

Page 190. *Davis*. Jefferson Davis, the President of the so-called Confederate States, was a Senator from Mississippi from 1847 to 1850.

Page 190. *Hannegan*. Edward A. Hannegan was Senator from Indiana from 1843 to 1849. He was afterwards Minister to Prussia. Died in 1859.

Page 190. *Jarnagin*. Spencer Jarnagin repre-

sented the State of Tennessee in the Senate from 1841 to 1847. He died in 1851.

Page 190. *Atherton*. Charles G. Atherton (1804-1853) was Senator from New Hampshire from 1843 to 1849.

Page 191. *Colquitt*. W. T. Colquitt (1799-1856) was Senator from Georgia, 1843-1849.

Page 191. *Johnson*. Reverdy Johnson was Senator from Maryland, 1845-1849.

Page 191. *Westcott*. James D. Westcott, Senator from Florida, 1845-1849.

Page 191. *Lewis*. Dixon H. Lewis represented Alabama in the House of Representatives from 1829 to 1843, and in the Senate from 1844 till his death in 1848.

Page 192. "*Payris*." The revolution in France was hailed with delight in the United States as a triumph of freedom and popular government. In Congress the event gave opportunity for much sounding declamation, in which the Southern members participated with as much enthusiasm as those from the North. At the same time when the Abolitionists sought to turn all this philosophy to some more practical application nearer home, the attempt was bitterly denounced at Washington and by the Democratic press generally. A striking instance of this inconsistency is afforded by a speech of Senator Foote. "The age of tyrants and slavery," said he, in allusion to France, "is drawing to a close. The happy period to be signalized by the universal emancipation of man from the fetters of civil oppression, and the recognition in all countries of the great principles of popular sovereignty, equality, and brotherhood, is at this moment visibly commencing." A few days later, when Mr. Mann, the attorney for Drayton and Sayres, quoted these very words in palliation of his clients' offence, he was peremptorily checked by the judge for uttering "inflammatory" words that might "endanger our institutions."

Page 194. *Candidate for the Presidency*. In the campaign of 1848 the Whigs determined to have substantially no platform or programme at all, in order to retain the Southern element in their party. Accordingly a colorless candidate was selected in the person of General Zachary Taylor, who, it was said, had never voted or made any political confession of faith. He was nominated as the "people's candidate," and men of all parties were invited to support him. He refused to pledge himself to any policy or enter into any details, unless on some such obsolete issue as that of a National Bank. After it became apparent that his followers were chiefly Whigs, he declared himself a Whig also, "although not an ultra one." He particularly avoided compromising himself on the slavery question. When, in the beginning of 1847, Mr. J. W. Taylor, of the *Cincinnati Signal*, questioned him on the Wilmot Proviso, he answered in such vague phrases that the confused editor interpreted them first as favoring and finally as opposing the measure. This declaration, together with the candidate's announcement that he was a Whig, was taken in the North to mean that he was opposed to the extension of slavery. The fact that he was a Southerner and a slaveholder was sufficient to reassure the South.

Page 195. *Pinto*. Pseudonym of Mr. Charles F. Briggs (1810-1877), the same who was afterwards associated with Edgar A. Poe on the *Broadway Review*.



Page 195. "*The darned Proviso.*" August 8, 1846, the President addressed a message to both Houses asking for \$2,000,000 to conclude a peace with Mexico and recompense her for her proposed cession of territory. On the same day McKay, of North Carolina, introduced a bill into the lower House for this purpose. David Wilmot, of Pennsylvania, a Democrat and a zealous friend of annexation, moved as a proviso that slavery should forever be excluded from the new territory. The motion was suddenly and unexpectedly carried by a vote of 83 to 54. It did not come to a vote in the Senate, for John Davis, of Massachusetts, talked it to death by a long speech in its favor. Nevertheless it became at once a burning question in both North and South. The more pronounced anti-slavery men of the former section tried to make it the political test in the coming campaign. The refusal of the Whig party to take up the question caused large accessions to the old Liberty party, now known as the Free-Soil, and later to become the Republican party.

Page 201. *Faneuil Hall—Colonel Wright.* Cf. notes to p. 176.

Page 203. *Ashland, etc.* It hardly need be said that Ashland was the home of Henry Clay; North Bend, of Harrison; Marshfield, of Webster; Kinderhook, of Van Buren; and Baton Rouge, of General Taylor.

Page 204. "*Philadelphia nominees.*" The Philadelphia nominee was General Zachary Taylor.

Page 205. "*A Wig, but without bein' ultry.*" Cf. note to p. 194.

Page 205. "*Mashfel' speech.*" The speech here referred to is the one delivered by Webster at Marshfield, September 1, 1848. While he affirmed that the nomination of Taylor was "not fit to be made," he nevertheless declared that he would vote for him, and advised his friends to do the same. "The sagacious, wise, and far-seeing doctrine of availability," said he, "lay at the root of the whole matter."

Page 205. *Choate.* Into none of his political addresses did Rufus Choate throw so much of his heart and soul as into those which upheld the falling policy of the Whig party from 1848 to 1852.

Page 205. *Buffalo.* On August 9, 1848, the convention containing the consolidated elements of constitutional opposition to the extension of slavery met at Buffalo. The party, calling itself the Free-Soil party now, declared its platform to be "no more slave States and no more slave territory." Martin Van Buren and Charles Francis Adams were the candidates selected. Van Buren was chosen because it was thought he might attract Democratic votes. His opposition to the extension of slavery was not very energetic. In his letter accepting the nomination he commended the convention for having taken no decisive stand against slavery in the District of Columbia.

Page 207. "*To act agin the law.*" The slaveholding States early legislated to forbid education and free religious meetings to slaves and free people of color. Stroud's *Sketch of the Slave Laws* (Philadelphia, 1827) shows that the principal acts of this character date from the period between 1740 and 1770. This was long before the oldest anti-slavery societies were organized. Thus these laws cannot be represented as

having been the result of impertinent and intemperate agitation on the part of Northern Abolitionists. They were frequently defended on this ground in the heat of the anti-slavery conflict.

## SECOND SERIES.

Page 240. *The Cotton Loan.* In 1861 a magnificent scheme was devised for bolstering up the Confederate government's credit. The planters signed agreements subscribing a certain portion of the next cotton and tobacco crop to the government. Using this as a basis for credit, the government issued bonds and placed about \$15,000,000 in Europe, chiefly in England. A much greater loan might have been negotiated had it not suddenly appeared that the agreements made by the planters were almost worthless. By the end of the year the plan was quietly and completely abandoned. The English bondholders had the audacity to apply for aid to the United States after the war.

Page 240. *Memminger.* Charles Gustavus Memminger, although he had opposed nullification, was one of the leaders in the secession movement which began in his own State, South Carolina. On the formation of the Confederate government he was made Secretary of the Treasury. Although not without experience in the management of his State's finances, he showed little skill in his new position.

Page 240. "*Cornificatin' all debts.*" After the failure of the Produce Loan and one or two other measures on a similarly grand scale, the Confederate government resorted to simpler means. Chief among these were the acts confiscating the property of and all debts due to alien enemies. No great number of reputable persons in the South could resolve to compound or wipe out debts involving their personal honor, so the results of the scheme were meagre.

Page 242. *Mason and Slidell.* In the latter part of 1861 President Davis undertook to send agents or commissioners to England and France to represent the Southern cause. The men chosen were James M. Mason, of Virginia, and John Slidell, of Louisiana. On the 12th of October they left Charleston, eluded the blockading squadron, and landed at Havana. Thence they embarked for St. Thomas on the British mail-steamers Trent. On the way the Trent was stopped by Captain Wilkes, of the American man-of-war San Jacinto, and the Confederate agents were transferred as prisoners to the latter vessel. The British government at once proclaimed the act "a great outrage," and sent a peremptory demand for the release of the prisoners and reparation. At the same time, without waiting for any explanation, it made extensive preparations for hostilities. It seemed and undoubtedly was expedient for the United States to receive Lord Russell's demand as an admission that imprisonment of British seamen found on board neutral vessels was unwarrantable. Acting on the demand as an admission of the principle so long contended for by the United States, Mr. Seward disavowed the act of Wilkes and released the commissioners. But it was held then and has since been stoutly maintained by many jurists that the true principles of international law will not justify a neutral vessel in transporting the agent of a belligerent on a

hostile mission. On the analogy of despatches they should be contraband. The difficulty of amicable settlement at that time, however, lay not so much in the point of law as in the intensity of popular feeling on both sides of the Atlantic.

Page 245. *Belligerent rights.* One month after Sumter was attacked, on May 13, 1861, the Queen issued a proclamation of neutrality, according belligerent rights to the Confederacy. This was done even before Mr. Adams, the new minister from the Lincoln administration, could reach England. Commercial interest cannot excuse so precipitate a recognition. It cannot be regarded as anything but a deliberate expression of unfriendliness towards the United States. It coldly contemplated the dissolution of the Union, favored the establishment of an independent slave-empire, and by its moral support strengthened the hands of the Rebellion and prolonged the war.

Page 245. *Confederate privateers.* It is notorious that Confederate cruisers were built, equipped, and even partially manned in England in open disregard of the international law respecting neutrals. Mr. Adams protested constantly and emphatically against this, but in vain for the time. No notice was taken officially of the matter until it was forced on the British government in 1864. The subsequent negotiations concerning the Alabama claims, the Treaty of Washington in 1871, and the Geneva award to the United States of some fifteen million dollars, are too well known to require any mention.

Page 245. *The Caroline.* In 1837 an insurrection broke out in Canada, and armed bodies of men styling themselves "patriots" were in open rebellion against the government. In spite of the President's message exhorting citizens of the United States not to interfere, and in defiance of the troops sent to Buffalo to carry out his orders, numbers of sympathizers from New York crossed the Niagara River and gave assistance to the insurgents. The British authorities would have been warranted in seizing the American vessel *Caroline*, which was used to transport citizens to the Canadian shore, had the seizure been made *in flagrante delicto*, or out of our territorial waters. But in crossing to the American side of the river and taking the offending vessel from her moorings these authorities committed a grave breach of neutrality. After five years of negotiation the English government finally apologized and made reparation for the injury.

Page 247. *"Seward sticks a three-months' pin."* Mr. W. H. Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State, was at the outbreak of the Rebellion an earnest advocate of conciliation. He seemed to think that if war could be averted for a time until the people of the seceding States perceived the true intention of the administration to be the preservation of the Union, not the promoting of Abolitionism, the Southern movement would fail. In this belief he frequently declared that the trouble would all be over in sixty days.

Page 251. *Bull Run.* On the 21st of July, 1861, the Union troops under General McDowell were completely routed by Beauregard at Bull Run in Virginia. The North was finally convinced that the South was equipped for and

determined on a desperate struggle, while the victory gave immense encouragement to the insurgents.

Page 257. *Onesimus.* The "Scriptural" view, according to the mind of Mr. Sawin, would have been that of Jeremiah S. Black, who saw in the case of Onesimus St. Paul's express approval of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850.

Page 258. *Debow.* De Bow's *Commerical Review*, published in New Orleans, Louisiana, was for some years before the war very bitter against the North, its institutions, and its society in general.

Page 258. *Simms and Maury.* William Gilmore Simms, the South Carolina novelist and poet, is here referred to. Matthew Fontaine Maury, of Virginia, naval officer and hydrographer, was a man of some scientific attainments. He was the author of several works on the physical geography of the sea, navigation, and astronomy. Both men were born in the same year, 1806.

Page 259. *"Arms an' cannon."* John B. Floyd, while Secretary of War in Mr. Buchanan's Cabinet, was detected in the act of stripping Northern arsenals of arms and ammunition to supply the South. He began this work as early as December, 1859, and it is not known to what extent he carried it. Pollard, a Southern historian, says the South entered the war with 150,000 small-arms of the most approved modern pattern, all of which it owed to the government at Washington. Floyd resigned because some forts and posts in the South were not given up to the rebels.

Page 259. *"Admittin' we wuz nat'lly right."* President Buchanan's message of the first Monday of December, 1860, declared "the long-continued and intemperate interference of the Northern people with the question of slavery in the Southern States" had at last produced its natural effect; disunion was impending, and if those States could not obtain redress by constitutional means, secession was justifiable and the general government had no power to prevent it. The effect these utterances had in spreading and intensifying the spirit of secession is incalculable.

Page 259. *"On the jump to interfere."* During the larger part of the war great apprehension of attempts on the part of foreign powers to interfere prevailed in the Northern States. With the exception of Russia and Denmark, all Europe inclined toward the South. Our form of government was not favored by them, and they were not unwilling to see its failure demonstrated by a complete disruption. For a long time it was very generally believed that the South would be victorious in the end. Had the Confederacy at any time had a bright prospect of success, it is likely that England or France might have offered to interfere. Indeed, the success of the French scheme to set up a military empire in Mexico in defiance of the Monroe doctrine entirely depended on the contingency of a victory for secession. Napoleon therefore was urgent for mediation. The subject was suggested several times by the French foreign minister in his correspondence with Mr. Seward, and was pressed on the British government by France.

Page 262. *The Border States.* The Border States, by the contiguity to the North and their



natural unfitnes for a very profitable system of slave-labor, were slow to take a definite stand. President Lincoln's policy was to proceed cautiously at first, keep the slavery question in the background, and enlist the sympathies of these States by appeals to their attachment to the Union. Although the people of Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri were pretty evenly divided, the State governments were kept from seceding. Without the support of the Republican Congressmen from this section, Lincoln could not have carried out his abolition policy.

Page 263. *Hampton Roads.* The battle of Hampton Roads, at the entrance of Chesapeake Bay in Virginia, is remarkable for the revolution in naval warfare which it began. The utter worthlessness of wooden against armored vessels was suddenly and convincingly demonstrated. On the 8th of March, 1862, the Confederate armored ram Virginia, formerly Merrimac, made terrible havoc among the old wooden men-of-war stationed about Fortress Monroe. But at nine o'clock that night the little Monitor steamed into the Roads to the assistance of the shattered Federal navy. The next day's battle is one of the romances of war. Had Mr. Wilbur waited for the next Southern mail before writing this letter, the Devil might have had less credit given him.

Page 265. "*From the banks o' my own Mississippi.*" In the period from 1830 to 1840, the sudden and healthy increase of immigration and the flattering industrial prospect induced many Western and Southern States to make lavish expenditures for internal improvements. Their credit was good and they borrowed too largely. After the financial crisis of 1837, insolvency stared them in the face. A number repudiated, among whom Mississippi in particular was heavily indebted. Her securities were largely held in England. It added nothing to the credit of the Confederacy that Jefferson Davis had been an earnest advocate of repudiation.

Page 265. *Manassas, or Bull Run.* Cf. note to p. 251.

Page 266. *Roanoke.* The loss of Roanoke Island, on the coast of North Carolina, February 8, 1862, was a severe one to the South.

Page 266. "*Bufort.*" The finest harbor on the Southern coast was that of Port Royal, South Carolina, in the centre of the sea-island cotton district. This point the North fixed on as the best for a base of operations, and on October 29, 1861, a fleet of fifty vessels, including thirty-three transports, was sent against it. A fierce attack was begun on November 7, and on the next day the two forts, Walker and Beauregard, capitulated. Without encountering further opposition the Federal troops took possession of the town of Beaufort on an island in the harbor.

Page 266. *Millspring.* January 19, 1862, the Confederates under Crittenden were defeated with considerable loss at Millspring, Kentucky, by General G. H. Thomas.

Page 266. "*Recognition.*" Recognition of independence by the European powers, particularly France and England, would of course have been of the greatest value to the South. It is said that Mr. Roebuck's motion in the House of Commons to recognize the Confederate States would have passed but for the timely

news of Gettysburg. Certainly if it had, France would not have been slow to follow. It is difficult to overestimate the disastrous effect such events would have had on the Northern cause.

Page 266. *Belmont.* Mr. August Belmont, of New York, Chairman of the Democratic National Committee from 1860 to 1872, although opposed to secession, still attributed the cause and the responsibility for the continuance of the war to the Republican Administration. He led his party in clamoring for peace and conciliation, especially in 1864, and bitterly opposed reconstruction.

Page 266. *Vallandigham.* Clement L. Vallandigham, of Dayton, Ohio, was the most conspicuous and noisy one of the Peace Democrats during the war. His treasonable and seditious utterances finally led to his banishment to the South in May, 1863. Thence he repaired to Canada, where he remained while his party made him their candidate in the next gubernatorial campaign, in which he was ignominiously defeated.

Page 266. *Woodsee.* This refers to the brothers Benjamin and Fernando Wood, prominent Democrats of New York city. The former was editor of the *Daily News* and a Representative in Congress. The latter was several times Mayor of New York, and for twelve years a Representative in Congress.

Page 267. *Columbus.* After the fall of Fort Donelson, Columbus, Kentucky, was no longer tenable, and Beauregard ordered General Polk to evacuate it. March 3, 1862, a scouting party of Illinois troops, finding the post deserted, occupied it, and when Sherman approached the next day he found the Union flag flying over the town.

Page 267. *Donelson.* The capture of Fort Donelson, in Tennessee, February 16, 1862, by General Grant, was one of several Union successes in the West, whose value was almost entirely neutralized by McClellan's dilatory conduct of the Army of the Potomac. General John B. Floyd's precipitate retreat from the fort as the Union forces approached was afterwards represented in one of his official reports as an heroic exploit.

Page 270. *Taney.* Roger B. Taney, of Maryland, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States from 1836 to 1864. He is chiefly notable for the Dred Scott decision, in 1857, in which he held that a negro was not a "person" in the contemplation of the Constitution, and hence "had no rights a white man was bound to respect"; that the Constitution recognized property in slaves, and that this ownership was as much entitled to protection in the Territories as any other species of property. According to this, all legislation by Congress on slavery, except in its aid, was unconstitutional.

Page 270. *Compromise System.* Henry Clay was the "great compromiser." The aim of his life was the preservation of the Union even at the cost of extending slave territory. The three compromises for which he is famous were the Missouri in 1820, the Tariff in 1833, and the California or "Omnibus" Compromise in 1850, the most conspicuous feature of which was the Fugitive Slave Law.

Page 271. "*S. J. Court.*" At the beginning of Lincoln's administration, five of the Supreme Court Justices, an absolute majority, were from



the South, and had always been State-rights Democrats.

Page 273. "*The Law-'n'-Order Party of ole Cincinnati.*" In Cincinnati, on March 24, 1862, Wendell Phillips, while attempting to deliver one of his lectures on slavery and the war, was attacked by a mob and very roughly handled.

Page 281. *Gov'nor Seymour.* Horatio Seymour (1810-1886), of Utica, New York, was one of the most prominent and respected men in the Democratic party, and a bitter opponent of Lincoln. He had at this time been recently elected Governor of New York on a platform that denounced almost every measure the government had found it necessary to adopt for the suppression of the Rebellion. His influence contributed not a little to the encouragement of that spirit which inspired the Draft Riot in the city of New York in July, 1863.

Page 282. "*Pres'dunt's Proclamation.*" In the autumn of 1862 Mr. Lincoln saw that he must either retreat or advance boldly against slavery. He had already proceeded far enough against it to rouse a dangerous hostility among Northern Democrats, and yet not far enough to injure the institution or enlist the sympathy of pronounced anti-slavery men. He determined on decisive action. On September 22, 1862, he issued a monitory proclamation giving notice that on the first day of the next year he would, in the exercise of his war-power, emancipate all slaves of those States or parts of States in rebellion, unless certain conditions were complied with. This proclamation was at once violently assailed by the Democrats, led by such men as Seymour, and for a time the opposition threatened disaster to the administration. The elections in the five leading free States—New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois—went against the Republicans. But with the aid of New England, the West, and, not least of all, the Border Slave States, the President was assured a majority of about twenty in the new House to carry out his abolition policy.

Page 283. "*Kettelopotomachia.*" The incident furnishing the occasion for this poem was a Virginia duel, or rather a free fight. Mr. H. R. Pollard, of the *Richmond Examiner*, had some difficulty with Messrs. Coleman and N. P. Tyler, of the *Enquirer*, concerning the public printing. On Friday, January 5, 1866, all three gentlemen met in the rotunda of the Virginia Capitol, and proceeded to settle their dispute by an appeal to revolvers. Six shots were fired, but no damage resulted, except to a marble statue of Washington.

Page 284. "*Letcheris.*" John Letcher (1813-1884), a Virginia lawyer and politician, was several times in Congress, and was Governor of his State from 1860 to 1864.

Page 284. "*Floydis.*" John B. Floyd (1805-1863) was Governor of Virginia from 1849 to

1852, Secretary of War in Buchanan's Cabinet, and a brigadier in the Confederate service.

Page 285. "*Extra ordine Billis.*" William Smith, of King George County, Virginia, was the proprietor of an old line of coaches running through Virginia and the Carolinas. He was called "Extra Billy" because he charged extra for every package, large or small, which his passengers carried. Mr. Smith himself, however, attributed his nickname to his extra service to the State. He was several times a Congressman, twice Governor of Virginia, and a Confederate Brigadier-General.

Page 295. *Seward.* Under the influence of Mr. Seward, President Andrew Johnson developed a policy of reconstruction directly opposed to the views of Congress and the mass of the Republican party. He believed in punishing individuals, if necessary, but that all the States ought to be re-installed at once in the position they had occupied in 1860. The guarantees against disloyalty he proposed to exact from the South were few and feeble. Congress, on the other hand, determined to keep the subdued States in a position somewhat resembling that of territories and under military surveillance until it could be satisfied that four years' war would not be without good results. Its chief aim was to secure the safety of the negro, who had been freed by the thirteenth Amendment in December, 1865. These differences of plan led to a protracted and bitter contest between the executive and legislative departments, culminating in the unsuccessful attempt to impeach Johnson in March, 1868. The Congressional policy was carried out over the President's vetoes. Among other conditions the Southern States were required to ratify the fourteenth and fifteenth Amendments, giving citizenship and suffrage to the blacks, before being qualified for readmission to the Union.

Page 298. "*Mac.*" General George B. McClellan was one of the leaders of the Northern Democracy during the war, and the presidential nominee against Lincoln in 1864.

Page 299. "*Johnson's speech an' veto message.*" The Civil Rights Act of March, 1866, had just been the occasion of an open rupture between Congress and the President. The bill, conferring extensive rights on freedmen, passed both Houses, but was vetoed by Johnson. It was quickly passed again over his veto.

Page 299. "*A temp'ry party can be based on 'I.*" Johnson's plan of reconstruction did, indeed, furnish the material for the next Democratic platform in the presidential campaign of 1868.

Page 299. *Tyler.* John Tyler, who had been chosen Vice-President in 1840, succeeded to the Presidency on the death of Harrison one month after the inauguration. He abandoned the policy of the party that elected him, and provoked just such a contest with it as Johnson did.

# GLOSSARY.

## A.

Act'ly, *actually*.  
 Air, *are*.  
 Airth, *earth*.  
 Airy, *area*.  
 Aree, *area*.  
 Arter, *after*.  
 Ax, *ask*.

## B.

Beller, *below*.  
 Bellowses, *lungs*.  
 Ben, *been*.  
 Bile, *boil*.  
 Bineby, *by and by*.  
 Blurt out, *to speak bluntly*.  
 Bust, *burst*.  
 Buster, *a roistering blade; used also as a general superlative*.

## C.

Caird, *carried*.  
 Cairn, *carrying*.  
 Caleb, *a turncoat*.  
 Cal'late, *calculate*.  
 Cass, *a person with two lives*.  
 Close, *clothes*.  
 Cockerel, *a young cock*.  
 Cocktail, *a kind of drink; also, an ornament peculiar to soldiers*.  
 Convention, *a place where people are imposed on; a juggler's show*.  
 Coons, *a cant term for a now defunct party; derived, perhaps, from the fact of their being commonly up a tree*.  
 Cornwallis, *a sort of muster in masquerade; supposed to have had its origin soon after the Revolution, and to commemorate the surrender of Lord Cornwallis. It took the place of the old Guy Fawkes procession*.  
 Crooked stick, *a perverse, forward person*.  
 Cunnle, *a colonel*.  
 Cus, *a curse; also, a pitiful fellow*.

## D.

Darsn't, *used indiscriminately, either in singular or plural number, for dare not, dares not, and dared not*.  
 Deacon off, *to give the cue to; derived from a custom, once universal, but now extinct, in our New England Congregational churches. An important part of the office of deacon was*

*to read aloud the hymns given out by the minister, one line at a time, the congregation singing each line as soon as read*.  
 Demmererat, *leadin', one in favor of extending slavery; a free-trade lecturer maintained in the custom-house*.  
 Desput, *desperate*.  
 Doos, *does*.  
 Doughface, *a contented lick-spittle; a common variety of Northern politician*.  
 Dror, *draw*.  
 Du, *do*.  
 Dunnno, dno, *do not or does not know*.  
 Dut, *dirt*.

## E.

Eend, *end*.  
 Ef, *if*.  
 Emptins, *yeast*.  
 Env'y, *envoy*.  
 Everlasting, *an intensive, without reference to duration*.  
 Ev'y, *every*.  
 Ez, *as*.

## F.

Fence, *on the; said of one who halts between two opinions; a trimmer*.  
 Fer, *for*.  
 Ferfle, *ferful, fearful; also an intensive*.  
 Fin', *find*.  
 Fish-skin, *used in New England to clarify coffee*.  
 Fix, *a difficulty, a nonplus*.  
 Foller, *folly, to follow*.  
 Forrerd, *forward*.  
 Frum, *from*.  
 Fur, *far*.  
 Furder, *farther*.  
 Furrer, *furrow. Metaphorically, to draw a straight furrow is to live uprightly or decorously*.  
 Fust, *first*.

## G.

Gin, *gave*.  
 Git, *get*.  
 Gret, *great*.  
 Grit, *spirit, energy, pluck*.  
 Grout, *to sulk*.  
 Grouty, *crabbed, surly*.  
 Gum, *to impose on*.  
 Gump, *a foolish fellow, a dullard*.  
 Gut, *got*.

## H.

Hed, *had*.  
 Heern, *heard*.  
 Helium, *helm*.  
 Hendy, *handy*.  
 Het, *heated*.  
 Hev, *havs*.  
 Hez, *has*.  
 Holl, *whole*.  
 Holt, *hold*.  
 Huf, *hoof*.  
 Hull, *whole*.  
 Hum, *home*.  
 Humbug, *General Taylor's antislavery*.  
 Hut, *hurt*.

## I.

Idno, *I do not know*.  
 In'in'y, *enemy*.  
 Insines, *ensigns*; used to designate both the officer who carries the standard, and the standard itself.  
 Inter, intu, *into*.

## J.

Jedge, *judge*.  
 Jest, *just*.  
 Jine, *join*.  
 Jint, *joint*.  
 Junk, *a fragment of any solid substance*.

## K.

Keer, *care*.  
 Kep', *kept*.  
 Killock, *a small anchor*.  
 Kin', kin' o', kinder, *kind, kind of*.

## L.

Lawth, *loath*.  
 Less, *let's, let us*.  
 Let daylight into, *to shoot*.  
 Let on, *to hint, to confess, to own*.  
 Lick, *to beat, to overcome*.  
 Lights, *the bowels*.  
 Lily-pads, *leaves of the water-lily*.  
 Long-sweetening, *molasses*.

## M.

Mash, *marsh*.  
 Mean, *stingy, ill-natured*.  
 Min', *mind*.

## N.

Nimepunce, *ninepence, twelve and a half cents*.  
 Nowers, *nowhere*.

## O.

Offen, *often*.  
 Ole, *old*.  
 Ollers, olluz, *always*.  
 On, of; used before it or them, or at the end of a sentence, as *on't, on'em, nut as ever I heard on*.  
 On'y, *only*.  
 Ousifer, *officer (seldom heard)*.

## P.

Peaked, *pointed*.  
 Peek, *to peep*.  
 Pickerel, *the pike, a fish*.  
 Pint, *point*.  
 Pocket full of rocks, *plenty of money*.  
 Pooty, *pretty*.  
 Pop'ler, *concelled, popular*.  
 Pus, *purse*.  
 Put out, *troubled, vexed*.

## Q.

Quarter, *a quarter-dollar*.  
 Queen's-arm, *a musket*.

## R.

Resh, *rush*.  
 Revelee, *the réveille*.  
 Rile, *to trouble*.  
 Riled, *angry; disturbed, as the sediment in any liquid*.  
 Riz, *risen*.  
 Row, *a long row to hoe, a difficult task*.  
 Rugged, *robust*.

## S.

Sarse, *abuse, impertinence*.  
 Sartin, *certain*.  
 Saxon, *sacristan, sexton*.  
 Scaliest, *worst*.  
 Scringe, *cringe*.  
 Scrouge, *to crowd*.  
 Sech, *such*.  
 Set by, *valued*.  
 Shakes, *great, of considerable consequence*.  
 Shappoes, *chapeaux, cocked-hats*.  
 Sheer, *share*.  
 Shet, *shut*.  
 Shut, *shirt*.  
 Skeered, *scared*.  
 Skeeter, *mosquito*.  
 Skooting, *running, or moving swiftly*.  
 Slarterin', *slaughtering*.  
 Slim, *contemptible*.  
 Snake, *crawled like a snake; but to snake any one out is to track him to his hiding-place; to snake a thing out is to snatch it out*.  
 Soffles, *sofas*.  
 Sogerin', *soldiering; a barbarous amusement common among men in the savage state*.  
 Som'ers, *somewhere*.  
 So't, *so as that*.  
 Sot, *set, obstinate, resolute*.  
 Spiles, *spoils; objects of political ambition*.  
 Spry, *active*.  
 Staidles, *stout stakes driven into the salt marshes, on which the hay-ricks are set, and thus raised out of the reach of high tides*.  
 Streaked, *uncomfortable, discomfited*.  
 Suckle, *circle*.  
 Sutthin', *something*.  
 Suttin, *certain*.

## T.

Take on, *to sorrow*.  
 Talents, *talons*.  
 Taters, *potatoes*.  
 Tell, *till*.



**Tetch, touch.**

**Tetch tu, to be able;** used always after a negative in this sense.

**Tollable, tolerable.**

**Toot, used derisively for playing on any wind instrument.**

**Thru, through.**

**Thundering, a euphemism common in New England for the profane English expression devilish.** Perhaps derived from the belief, common formerly, that thunder was caused by the Prince of the Air, for some of whose accomplishments consult Cotton Mather.

**Tu, to, too;** commonly has this sound when used emphatically, or at the end of a sentence. At other times it has the sound of *t* in *tough*, as, *Ware ye goin' to? Goin' ta Boston.*

### U.

**Ugly, ill-tempered, intractable.**

**Uncle Sam, United States;** the largest booster of liberty and owner of slaves.

**Unrizzest, applied to dough or bread;** heavy, most unrisen, or most incapable of rising.

### V.

**V-spot, a five-dollar bill.**

**Vally, value.**

### W.

**Wake snakes, to get into trouble.**

**Wal, well;** spoken with great deliberation, and sometimes with the *a* very much flattened, sometimes (but more seldom) very much broadened.

**Wannut, walnut (hickory).**

**Ware, where.**

**Ware, were.**

**Whopper, an uncommonly large lie;** as, that General Taylor is in favor of the Wilnot Proviso.

**Wig, Whig;** a party now dissolved.

**Wunt, will not.**

**Wus, worse.**

**Wut, what.**

**Wuth, worth;** as, *Antislavery professions 'fore 'lection aint wuth a Bungtown copper.*

**Wuz, was, sometimes were.**

### Y.

**Yaller, yellow.**

**Yeller, yellow.**

**Yellers, a disease of peach-trees.**

### Z.

**Zach, Ole, a second Washington, an antislavery slaveholder;** a humane buyer and seller of men and women, a Christian hero generally.

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**THE UNHAPPY LOT OF MR. KNOTT.**

1850.



# THE UNHAPPY LOT OF MR. KNOTT.

## PART I.

SHOWING HOW HE BUILT HIS HOUSE  
AND HIS WIFE MOVED INTO IT.

MY worthy friend, A. Gordon Knott,  
From business snug withdrawn,  
Was much contented with a lot  
That would contain a Tudor cot  
Twixt twelve feet square of garden-plot,  
And twelve feet more of lawn.

He had laid business on the shelf  
To give his taste expansion,  
And, since no man, retired with pelf,  
The building mania can shun,  
Knott, being middle-aged himself,  
Resolved to build (unhappy elf!)  
A mediæval mansion.

He called an architect in counsel;  
"I want," said he, "a — you know  
what,  
(You are a builder, I am Knott,)  
A thing complete from chimney-pot  
Down to the very grounself;  
Here's a half-acre of good land;  
Just have it nicely mapped and  
planned  
And make your workmen drive on;  
Meadow there is, and upland too,  
And I should like a water-view,  
D'you think you could contrive one?  
(Perhaps the pump and trough would  
do,

If painted a judicious blue?)  
The woodland I've attended to";  
[He meant three pines stuck up  
askew,

Two dead ones and a live one.]  
"A pocket-full of rocks 't would take  
To build a house of freestone,  
But then it is not hard to make

What nowadays is *the* stone;  
The cunning painter in a trice  
Your house's outside petrifies,  
And people think it very gneiss  
Without inquiring deeper;  
*My* money never shall be thrown  
Away on such a deal of stone,  
When stone of deal is cheaper."

And so the greenest of antiques  
Was reared for Knott to dwell in:  
The architect worked hard for weeks  
In venting all his private peaks  
Upon the roof, whose crop of leaks  
Had satisfied Fluellen;  
Whatever anybody had  
Out of the common, good or bad,  
Knott had it all worked well in;  
A donjon-keep, where clothes might  
dry,  
A porter's lodge that was a sty,  
A campanile slim and high,  
Too small to hang a bell in;  
All up and down and here and there,  
With Lord-knows-whats of round and  
square  
Stuck on at random everywhere, —  
It was a house to make one stare,  
All corners and all gables;  
Like dogs let loose upon a bear,  
Ten emulous styles *staboyed* with care,  
The whole among them seemed to tear,  
And all the oddities to spare  
Were set upon the stables.

Knott was delighted with a pile  
Approved by fashion's leaders:  
(Only he made the builder smile,  
By asking every little while,  
Why that was called the Twodoor style,  
Which certainly had *three* doors?)  
Yet better for this luckless man  
If he had put a downright ban



Upon the thing *in limine* ;  
 For, though to quit affairs his plan,  
 Ere many days, poor Knott began  
 Perforce accepting draughts, that ran  
 All ways — except up chimney ;  
 The house, though painted stone to  
 mock,  
 With nice white lines round every  
 block,

Some trepidation stood in,  
 When tempests (with petrific shock,  
 So to speak,) made it really rock,  
 Though not a whit less wooden ;  
 And painted stone, howe'er well done,  
 Will not take in the prodigal sun  
 Whose beams are never quite at one

With our terrestrial lumber ;  
 So the wood shrank around the knots,  
 And gaped in disconcerting spots,  
 And there were lots of dots and rots  
 And crannies without number,  
 Wherethrough, as you may well pre-  
 sume,

The wind, like water through a flume,  
 Came rushing in ecstatic,  
 Leaving, in all three floors, no room  
 That was not a rheumatic ;  
 And, what with points and squares and  
 rounds

Grown shaky on their poises,  
 The house at nights was full of pounds,  
 Thumps, bumps, creaks, scratchings,  
 raps — till — “Zounds !”  
 Cried Knott, “this goes beyond all  
 bounds ;

I do not deal in tongues and sounds,  
 Nor have I let my house and grounds  
 To a family of Noyeses !”

But, though Knott's house was full of  
 airs,

*He* had but one, — a daughter ;  
 And, as he owned much stocks and  
 shares,

Many who wished to render theirs  
 Such vain, unsatisfying cares,  
 And needed wives to sew their tears,  
 In matrimony sought her ;  
 They vowed her gold they wanted not,  
 Their faith would never falter,  
 They longed to tie this single Knott  
 In the Hymeneal halter ;

So daily at the door they rang,  
 Cards for the belle delivering,  
 Or in the choir at her they sang,  
 Achieving such a rapturous twang  
 As set her nerves ashivering.

Now Knott had quite made up his mind  
 That Colonel Jones should have her ;  
 No beauty he, but oft we find  
 Sweet kernels 'neath a roughish rind,  
 So hoped his Jenny 'd be resigned  
 And make no more palaver ;  
 Glanced at the fact that love was blind,  
 That girls were ratherish inclined  
 To pet their little crosses,  
 Then nosologically defined  
 The rate at which the system pined  
 In those unfortunates who dined  
 Upon that metaphoric kind  
 Of dish — their own proboscis.

But she, with many tears and moans,  
 Besought him not to mock her,  
 Said 't was too much for flesh and bones  
 To marry mortgages and loans,  
 That fathers' hearts were stocks and  
 stones,

And that she 'd go, when Mrs. Jones,  
 To Davy Jones's locker ;  
 Then gave her head a little toss  
 That said as plain as ever was,  
 If men are always at a loss  
 Mere womankind to bridle —  
 To try the thing on woman cross  
 Were fifty times as idle ;  
 For she a strict resolve had made  
 And registered in private,  
 That either she would die a maid,  
 Or else be Mrs. Doctor Slade,  
 If woman could contrive it ;  
 And, though the wedding-day was set,  
 Jenny was more so, rather,  
 Declaring, in a pretty pet,  
 That, howsoe'er they spread their net,  
 She would out-Jennyral them yet,  
 The colonel and her father.

Just at this time the Public's eyes  
 Were keenly on the watch, a stir  
 Beginning slowly to arise  
 About those questions and replies,  
 Those raps that unwrapped mysteries  
 So rapidly at Rochester,  
 And Knott, already nervous grown  
 By lying much awake alone,  
 And listening, sometimes to a moan,  
 And sometimes to a clatter,  
 Whene'er the wind at night would rouse  
 The gingerbread-work on his house,  
 Or when some hasty-tempered mouse,  
 Behind the plastering, made a towse  
 About a family matter,  
 Began to wonder if his wife,

A paralytic half her life,  
Which made it more surprising,  
Might not to rule him from her urn,  
Have taken a peripatetic turn  
For want of exorcising.

This thought, once nestled in his head,  
Erelong contagious grew, and spread  
Infecting all his mind with dread,  
Until at last he lay in bed  
And heard his wife, with well-known  
tread,

Entering the kitchen through the shed,  
(Or was't his fancy, mocking?)  
Opening the pantry, cutting bread,  
And then (she'd been some ten years  
dead)

Closets and drawers unlocking;  
Or, in his room (his breath grew thick)  
He heard the long-familiar click  
Of slender needles flying quick,  
As if she knit a stocking;  
For whom?—he prayed that years might  
fit

With pains rheumatic shooting,  
Before those ghostly things she knit  
Upon his unflashed sole might fit,  
He did not fancy it a bit,

To stand upon that footing;  
At other times, his frightened hairs  
Above the bedclothes trusting,  
He heard her, full of household cares,  
(No dream entrapped in supper's snares,  
The foal of horrible nightmares,  
But broad awake, as he declares,)  
Go bustling up and down the stairs,  
Or setting back last evening's chairs,  
Or with the poker thrusting  
The raked-up sea-coal's hardened  
crust—

And—what! impossible! it must!  
He knew she had returned to dust,  
And yet could scarce his senses trust,  
Hearing her as she poked and fussed  
About the parlor, dusting!

Night after night he strove to sleep  
And take his ease in spite of it;  
But still his flesh would chill and creep,  
And, though two night-lamps he might  
keep,

He could not so make light of it.  
At last, quite desperate, he goes  
And tells his neighbors all his woes,  
Which did but their amount enhance;  
They made such mockery of his fears  
That soon his days were of all jeers,

His nights of the rueful countenance;  
"I thought most folks," one neighbor  
said,

"Gave up the ghost when they were  
dead?"

Another gravely shook his head,  
Adding, "From all we hear, it's  
Quite plain poor Knott is going mad—  
For how can he at once be sad

And think he's full of spirits?"  
A third declared he knew a knife  
Would cut this Knott much quicker,  
"The surest way to end all strife,  
And lay the spirit of a wife,  
Is just to take and lick her!"  
A temperance man caught up the word,  
"Ah, yes," he groaned, "I've always  
heard

Our poor friend somewhat slanted  
Tow'rd taking liquor overmuch;  
I fear these spirits may be Dutch,  
(A sort of gins, or something such,)

With which his house is haunted;  
I see the thing as clear as light,—  
If Knott would give up getting tight,  
Naught farther would be wanted":  
So all his neighbors stood aloof  
And, that the spirits 'neath his roof  
Were not entirely up to proof,  
Unanimously granted.

Knott knew that cocks and sprites were  
foes,

And so bought up, Heaven only knows  
How many, for he wanted crows  
To give ghosts caws, as I suppose,

To think that day was breaking;  
Moreover what he called his park,  
He turned into a kind of ark  
For dogs, because a little bark  
Is a good tonic in the dark,  
If one is given to waking;

But things went on from bad to worse,  
His curs were nothing but a curse,

And, what was still more shocking,  
Foul ghosts of living fowl made scoff  
And would not think of going off  
In spite of all his cocking.

Shanghais, Bucks-counties, Dominiques,  
Malays (that did n't lay for weeks,)

Polanders, Bantams, Dorkings,  
(Waiving the cost, no trifling ill,  
Since each brought in his little bill,)

By day or night were never still,  
But every thought of rest would kill  
With cacklings and with quorkings;  
Henry the Eighth of wives got free

By a way he had of axing ;  
 But poor Knott's Tudor henery  
 Was not so fortunate, and he  
 Still found his trouble waxing ;  
 As for the dogs, the rows they made,  
 And how they howled, snarled, barked  
 and bayed,

Beyond all human knowledge is ;  
 All night, as wide awake as gnats,  
 The terriers rumpused after rats,  
 Or, just for practice, taught their brats  
 To worry cast-off shoes and hats,  
 The bull-dogs settled private spats,  
 All chased imaginary cats,  
 Or raved behind the fence's slats  
 At real ones, or, from their mats,  
 With friends, miles off, held pleasant  
 chats,

Or, like some folks in white cravats,  
 Contemptuous of sharps and flats,

Sat up and sang dogsologies.  
 Meanwhile the cats set up a squall,  
 And, safe upon the garden-wall,

All night kept cat-a-walling,  
 As if the feline race were all,  
 In one wild cataleptic sprawl,  
 Into love's tortures falling.

## PART II

### SHOWING WHAT IS MEANT BY A FLOW OF SPIRITS.

AT first the ghosts were somewhat  
 shy,

Coming when none but Knott was nigh,  
 And people said 't was all their eye,  
 (Or rather his) a flam, the sly

Digestion's machination :  
 Some recommended a wet sheet,  
 Some a nice broth of pounded peat,  
 Some a cold flat-iron to the feet,  
 Some a decoction of lamb's-bleat,  
 Some a southwesterly grain of wheat ;  
 Meat was by some pronounced unmeet,  
 Others thought fish most indiscreet,  
 And that 't was worse than all to eat  
 Of vegetables, sour or sweet,  
 (Except, perhaps, the skin of beet,)

In such a concatenation :  
 One quack his button gently plucks  
 And murmurs, " Biliary ducks !"  
 Says Knott, " I never ate one " ;  
 But all, though brimming full of wrath,  
 Homœo, Allo, Hydropath,  
 Concurred in this — that t' other's path  
 To death's door was the straight one

Still, spite of medical advice,  
 The ghosts came thicker, and a spice  
 Of mischief grew apparent ;  
 Nor did they only come at night,  
 But seemed to fancy broad daylight,  
 Till Knott, in horror and affright,  
 His unoffending hair rent ;  
 Whene'er with handkerchief on lap,  
 He made his elbow-chair a trap,  
 To catch an after-dinner nap,  
 The spirits, always on the tap,  
 Would make a sudden *rap, rap, rap*,  
 The half-spun cord of sleep to snap,  
 (And what is life without its nap  
 But threadbareness and mere mishap ?)  
 As 't were with a percussion cap  
 The trouble's climax capping ;  
 It seemed a party dried and grim  
 Of mummies had come to visit him,  
 Each getting off from every limb  
 Its multitudinous wrapping ;  
 Scratchings sometimes the walls ran  
 round,  
 The merest penny-weights of sound ;  
 Sometimes 't was only by the pound  
 They carried on their dealing,  
 A thumping 'neath the parlor floor,  
 Thump-bump-thump-bumping o'er and  
 o'er,

As if the vegetables in store  
 (Quiet and orderly before)  
 Were all together peeling ;  
 You would have thought the thing was  
 done

By the spirit of some son of a gun,  
 And that a forty-two-pounder,  
 Or that the ghost which made such  
 sounds

Could be none other than John Pounds,  
 Of Ragged Schools the founder.  
 Through three gradations of affright,  
 The awful noises reached their height ;  
 At first they knocked nocturnally,  
 Then, for some reason, changing quite, (,  
 (As mourners, after six months' flight,  
 Turn suddenly from dark to light,)

Began to knock diurnally,  
 And last, combining all their stocks,  
 (Scotland was ne'er so full of Knox,)  
 Into one Chaos (father of Nox,)

*Nocte pluit* — they showered knocks,  
 And knocked, knocked, knocked,  
 eternally ;

Ever upon the go, like buoys,  
 (Wooden sea-urchins,) all Knott's joys,  
 They turned to troubles and a noise  
 That preyed on him internally.



Soon they grew wider in their scope ;  
Whenever Knott a door would ope,  
It would ope not, or else elope  
And fly back (curbless as a trope  
Once started down a stanza's slope  
By a bard that gave it too much rope — )

Like a clap of thunder slamming ;  
And, when kind Jenny brought his hat,  
(She always, when he walked, did that,)  
Just as upon his head it sat,  
Submitting to his settling pat,  
Some unseen hand would jam it flat,  
Or give it such a furious bat

That eyes and nose went cramming  
Up out of sight, and consequently,  
As when in life it paddled free,

His beaver caused much damning ;  
If these things seem o'er-strained to  
be,

Read the account of Doctor Dee,  
'Tis in our college library ;  
Read Wesley's circumstantial plea,  
And Mrs. Crowe, more like a bee,  
Sucking the nightshade's honeyed fee,  
And Stilling's Pneumatology ;  
Consult Scot, Glanvil, grave Wie-  
rus, and both Mathers ; further see,  
Webster, Casaubon, James First's trea-  
tise, a right royal Q. E. D.

Writ with the moon in perigee,  
Bodin de la Demonomanie —  
(Accent that last line gingerly)  
All full of learning as the sea  
Of fishes, and all disagree,  
Save in *Sathanas apage!*  
Or, what will surely put a flea  
In unbelieving ears — with glee,  
Out of a paper (sent to me  
By some friend who forgot to P...  
A...Y... — I use cryptography  
Lest I his vengeful pen should dree —  
His P...O...S...T...A...G...E...)

Things to the same effect I cut,  
About the tantrums of a ghost,  
Not more than three weeks since, at  
most,

Near Stratford, in Connecticut.

Knott's Upas daily spread its roots,  
Sent up on all sides livelier shoots,  
And bore more pestilential fruits ;  
The ghosts behaved like downright  
brutes,

They snipped holes in his Sunday suits,  
Practised all night on octave flutes,  
Put peas (not peace) into his boots,

Whereof grew corns in season,

They scotched his sheets, and, what was  
worse,

Stuck his silk nightcap full of burrs,  
Till he, in language plain and terse,  
(But much unlike a Bible verse,)  
Swore he should lose his reason.

The tables took to spinning, too,  
Perpetual yarns, and arm-chairs grew

To prophets and apostles ;  
One footstool vowed that only he  
Of law and gospel held the key,  
That teachers of whate'er degree  
To whom opinion bows the knee  
Wern't fit to teach Truth's a b c.  
And were (the whole lot) to a T  
Mere fogies all and fossils ;

A teapoy, late the property  
Of Knox's Aunt Keziah,  
(Whom Jenny most irreverently  
Had nicknamed her aunt-tipathy)  
With tips emphatic claimed to be  
The prophet Jeremiah ;  
The tins upon the kitchen-wall,  
Turned tintinnabulators all,  
And things that used to come at call  
For simple household services  
Began to hop and whirl and prance,  
Fit to put out of countenance  
The *Commis* and *Grisettes* of France  
Or Turkey's dancing Dervises.

Of course such doings, far and wide,  
With rumors filled the country-side,  
And (as it is our nation's pride  
To think a Truth not verified  
Till with majorities allied)

Parties sprung up, affirmed, denied,  
And candidates with questions plied,  
Who, like the circus-riders, tried  
At once both hobbies to bestride,  
And each with his opponent vied  
In being inexplicit.

Earnest inquirers multiplied ;  
Folks, whose tenth cousins lately died,  
Wrote letters long, and Knott replied ;  
All who could either walk or ride  
Gathered to wonder or deride,

And paid the house a visit ;  
Horses were to his pine-trees tied,  
Mourners in every corner sighed,  
Widows brought children there that  
cried,

Swarms of lean Seekers, eager-eyed,  
(People Knott never could abide,)  
Into each hole and cranny pried  
With strings of questions cut and dried

From the Devout Inquirer's Guide,  
For the wise spirits to decide —

As, for example, is it  
True that the damned are fried or boiled ?  
Was the Earth's axis greased or oiled ?  
Who cleaned the moon when it was  
soiled ?

How baldness might be cured or foiled ?  
How heal diseased potatoes ?

Did spirits have the sense of smell ?  
Where would departed spinsters dwell ?  
If the late Zenas Smith were well ?  
If Earth were solid or a shell ?

Were spirits fond of Doctor Fell ?  
*Did* the bull toll Cock-Robin's knell ?

What remedy would bugs expel ?  
If Paine's invention were a sell ?  
Did spirits by Webster's system spell ?  
Was it a sin to be a belle ?

Did dancing sentence folks to hell ?  
If so, then where most torture fell —

On little toes or great toes ?  
If life's true seat were in the brain ?  
Did Ensign mean to marry Jane ?  
By whom, in fact, was Morgan slain ?  
Could matter ever suffer pain ?

What would take out a cherry-stain ?  
Who picked the pocket of Seth Crane,  
Of Waldo precinct, State of Maine ?

Was Sir John Franklin sought in vain ?  
Did primitive Christians ever train ?  
What was the family-name of Cain ?

Them spoons, were they by Betty ta'en ?  
Would earth-worm poultice cure a  
sprain ?

Was Socrates so dreadful plain ?  
What teamster guided Charles's wain ?

Was Uncle Ethan mad or sane,  
And could his will in force remain ?  
If not, what counsel to retain ?

Did Le Sage steal Gil Blas from Spain ?  
Was Junius writ by Thomas Paine ?

Were ducks discomfited by rain ?  
*How* did Britannia rule the main ?

Was Jonas coming back again ?  
Was vital truth upon the wane ?  
Did ghosts, to scare folks, drag a chain ?

Who was our Huldah's chosen swain ?  
Did none have teeth pulled without  
payin',

Ere ether was invented ?  
Whether mankind would not agree,  
If the universe were tuned in C ?

What was it ailed Lucindy's knee ?  
Whether folks eat folks in Feejee ?  
Whether *his* name would end with T ?

If Saturn's rings were two or three,

And what bump in Phrenology  
They truly represented ?  
These problems dark, wherein they  
groped,

Wherewith man's reason vainly coped,  
Now that the spirit-world was oped,  
In all humility they hoped

Would be resolved *instantly* ;  
Each of the miscellaneous rout  
Brought his, or her, own little doubt,  
And wished to pump the spirits out,  
Through his or her own private spout,  
Into his or her decanter.

### PART III.

WHEREIN IT IS SHOWN THAT THE  
MOST ARDENT SPIRITS ARE MORE  
ORNAMENTAL THAN USEFUL.

MANY a speculating wight  
Came by express-trains, day and night,  
To see if Knott would "sell his right,"  
Meaning to make the ghosts a sight —

What they called a "meenaygerie" ;  
One threatened, if he would not "trade,"  
His run of custom to invade,  
(He could not these sharp folks persuade  
That he was not, in some way, paid.)

And stamp him as a plagiarist,  
By coming down, at one fell swoop,  
With the ORIGINAL KNOCKING  
TROUPE,

Come recently from Hades,  
Who (for a quarter-dollar heard)  
Would ne'er rap out a hasty word  
Whence any blame might be incurred

From the most fastidious ladies ;  
The late lamented Jesse Soule  
To stir the ghosts up with a pole  
And be director of the whole,

Who was engaged the rather  
For the rare merits he'd combine,  
Having been in the spirit line,  
Which trade he only did resign,  
With general applause, to shine,  
Awful in mail of cotton fine,

As ghost of Hamlet's father !  
Another a fair plan reveals  
Never yet hit on, which, he feels,  
To Knott's religious sense appeals —  
"We'll have your house set up on  
wheels,

A speculation pious ;  
For music, we can shortly find  
A barrel-organ that will grind  
Psalm-tunes, — an instrument designed

For the New England tour — refined  
From secular drosses, and inclined  
To an unworldly turn, (combined

With no sectarian bias ;)  
Then, travelling by stages slow,  
Under the style of Knott & Co.,  
I would accompany the show  
As moral lecturer, the foe  
Of Rationalism ; while you could throw  
The rappings in, and make them go  
Strict Puritan principles, you know,  
(How *do* you make 'em ? with your toe ?)  
And the receipts which thence might flow,

We could divide between us ;  
Still more attractions to combine,  
Beside these services of mine,  
I will throw in a very fine  
(It would do nicely for a sign)  
Original Titian's Venus."

Another offered handsome fees  
If Knott would get Demosthenes  
(Nay, his mere knuckles, for more ease)  
To rap a few short sentences ;  
Or if, for want of proper keys,

His Greek might make confusion,  
Then just to get a rap from Burke,  
To recommend a little work  
On Public Elocution.

Meanwhile, the spirits made replies  
To all the reverent *whats* and *whys*,  
Resolving doubts of every size,  
And giving seekers grave and wise,  
Who came to know their destinies,

A rap-turous reception ;  
When unbelievers void of grace  
Came to investigate the place,  
(Creatures of Sadducistic race,  
With grovelling intellects and base,)  
They could not find the slightest trace  
To indicate deception ;

Indeed, it is declared by some  
That spirits (of this sort) are glum,  
Almost, or wholly, deaf and dumb,  
And (out of self-respect) quite mum  
To sceptic natures cold and numb,  
Who of *this* kind of Kingdom Come

Have not a just conception :  
True, there were people who demurred  
That, though the raps no doubt were heard

Both under them and o'er them,  
Yet, somehow, when a search they made,  
They found Miss Jenny sore afraid,  
Or Jenny's lover, Doctor Slade,  
Equally awe-struck and dismayed,  
Or Deborah, the chamber-maid,  
Whose terrors not to be gainsaid,  
In laughs hysteric were displayed,

Was always there before them ;  
This had its due effect with some  
Who straight departed, muttering, Hum !  
Transparent hoax ! and Gammon !  
But these were few : believing souls  
Came, day by day, in larger shoals,  
As the ancients to the windy holes  
'Neath Delphi's tripod brought their  
doles,

Or to the shrine of Ammon.

The spirits seemed exceeding tame,  
Call whom you fancied, and he came ;  
The shades august of eldest fame

You summoned with an awful ease ;  
As grosser spirits gurgled out  
From chair and table with a spout,  
In Auerbach's cellar once, to flout  
The senses of the rabble rout,  
Where'er the gimlet twirled about  
Of cunning Mephistopheles,  
So did these spirits seem in store,  
Behind the wainscot or the door,  
Ready to thrill the being's core  
Of every enterprising bore

With their astounding glamour ;  
Whatever ghost one wished to hear,  
By strange coincidence, was near  
To make the past or future clear  
(Sometimes in shocking grammar)

By raps and taps, now there, now here —  
It seemed as if the spirit queer  
Of some departed auctioneer  
Were doomed to practise by the year

With the spirit of his hammer :  
What'er you asked was answered, yet  
One could not very deeply get  
Into the obliging spirits' debt,  
Because they used the alphabet

In all communications,  
And new revealings (though sublime)  
Rapped out, one letter at a time,

With boggles, hesitations,  
Stoppings, beginnings o'er again,  
And getting matters into train,  
Could hardly overload the brain

With too excessive rations,  
Since just to ask *if two and two  
Really make four ? or, How d' ye do ?*  
And get the fit replies thereto  
In the tramundane rat-tat-too,  
Might ask a whole day's patience.

'T was strange (mongst other things) to  
find  
In what odd sets the ghosts combined,  
Happy forthwith to thump any



Piece of intelligence inspired,  
The truth whereof had been inquired

By some one of the company;  
For instance, Fielding, Mirabeau,  
Orator Henley, Cicero,  
Paley, John Zisca, Marivaux,  
Melanethon, Robertson, Junot,  
Scaliger, Chesterfield, Rousseau,  
Hakluyt, Boccaccio, South, De Foe,  
Diaz, Josephus, Richard Roe,  
Odin, Arminius, Charles *le gros*,  
Tiresias, the late James Crow,  
Casabianca, Grose, Prideaux,  
Old Grimes, Young Norval, Swift, Bris-

sot,  
Maimonides, the Chevalier D'O,  
Socrates, Fenelon, Job, Stow,  
The inventor of *Elixir pro*,  
Euripides, Spinoza, Poe,  
Confucius, Hiram Smith, and Fo,  
Came (as it seemed, somewhat *de trop*)  
With a disembodied Esquimaux,  
To say that it was so and so,

With Franklin's expedition;  
One testified to ice and snow,  
One that the mercury was low,  
One that his progress was quite slow,  
One that he much desired to go,  
One that the cook had frozen his toe,  
(Dissented from by Dandolo,  
Wordsworth, Cynægirus, Boileau,  
La Hontan, and Sir Thomas Roe,)  
One saw twelve white bears in a row,  
One saw eleven and a crow,  
With other things we could not know  
(Of great statistic value, though,)  
By our mere mortal vision.

Sometimes the spirits made mistakes,  
And seemed to play at ducks and drakes  
With bold inquiry's heaviest stakes  
In science or in mystery;  
They knew so little (and that wrong)  
Yet rapped it out so bold and strong,  
One would have said the unnumbered  
through

Had been Professors of History;  
What made it odder was, that those  
Who, you would naturally suppose,  
Could solve a question, if they chose,  
As easily as count their toes,

Were just the ones that blundered;  
One day, Ulysses happening down,  
A reader of Sir Thomas Browne

And who (with him) had wondered  
What song it was the Sirens sang,  
Asked the shrewd Ithacan — *bang! bang!*

With this response the chamber rang,  
"I guess it was Old Hundred."  
And Franklin, being asked to name  
The reason why the lightning came,  
Replied, "Because it thundered."

On one sole point the ghosts agreed,  
One fearful point, than which, indeed,  
Nothing could seem absurder;  
Poor Colonel Jones they all abused,  
And finally downright accused  
The poor old man of murder;  
"T was thus; by dreadful raps was shown  
Some spirit's longing to make known  
A bloody fact, which he alone  
Was privy to, (such ghosts more prone  
In Earth's affairs to meddle are;)  
*Who are you?* with awe-stricken looks,  
All ask: his airy knuckles he crooks,  
And raps, "I was Eliab Snooks,  
That used to be a pedler;  
Some on ye still are on my books!"  
Whereat, to inconspicuous nooks,  
(More fearing this than common spoeks,)  
Shrank each indebted meddler;  
Further the vengeful ghost declared  
That while his earthly life was spared,  
About the country he had fared,  
A duly licensed follower  
Of that much-wandering trade that wins  
Slow profit from the sale of tins  
And various kinds of hollow-ware;  
That Colonel Jones enticed him in,  
Pretending that he wanted tin,  
There slew him with a rolling-pin,  
Hid him in a potato-bin,

And (the same night) him ferried  
Across Great Pond to t' other shore,  
And there, on land of Widow Moore,  
Just where you turn to Larkin's store,  
Under a rock him buried;  
Some friends (who happened to be by)  
He called upon to testify  
That what he said was not a lie,  
And that he did not stir this  
Foul matter, out of any spite  
But from a simple love of right; —

Which statements the Nine Worthies,  
Rabbi Akiba, Charlemagne,  
Seth, Colley Cibber, General Wayne,  
Cambyses, Tasso, Tubal-Cain,  
The owner of a castle in Spain,  
Jehanghire, and the Widow of Nain,  
(The friends aforesaid,) made more plain  
And by loud raps attested;  
To the same purport testified  
Plato, John Wilkes, and Colonel Pride

Who knew said Snooks before he died,  
 Had in his wares invested,  
 Thought him entitled to belief  
 And freely could concur, in brief,  
 In everything the rest did.

Eliab this occasion seized,  
 (Distinctly here the spirit sneezed,)  
 To say that he should ne'er be eased  
 Till Jenny married whom she pleased,  
 Free from all checks and urgin's,  
 (This spirit dropt his final g's)  
 And that, unless Knott quickly sees  
 This done, the spirits to appease,  
 They would come back his life to tease,  
 As thick as mites in ancient cheese,  
 And let his house on an endless lease  
 To the ghosts (terrific rappers these  
 And veritable Eumenides)  
 Of the Eleven Thousand Virgins!

Knott was perplexed and shook his head,  
 He did not wish his child to wed  
 With a suspected murderer,  
 (For, true or false, the rumor spread,)  
 But as for this roiled life he led,  
 "It would not answer," so he said,  
 "To have it go no furdurer."  
 At last, scarce knowing what it meant,  
 Reluctantly he gave consent  
 That Jenny, since 't was evident  
 That she *would* follow her own bent,  
 Should make her own election;  
 For that appeared the only way  
 These frightful noises to allay  
 Which had already turned him gray  
 And plunged him in dejection.

Accordingly, this artless maid  
 Her father's ordinance obeyed,  
 And, all in whitest crape arrayed,  
 (Miss Pulsifer the dresses made  
 And wishes here the fact displayed  
 That she still carries on the trade,  
 The third door south from Bagg's Arcade,)  
 A very faint "I do" essayed  
 And gave her hand to Hiram Slade,  
 From which time forth, the ghosts were  
 laid,  
 And ne'er gave trouble after;  
 But the Selectmen, be it known,  
 Dug underneath the aforesaid stone,  
 Where the poor pedler's corpse was  
 thrown,  
 And found thereunder a jaw-bone,  
 Though, when the crowner sat thereon,  
 He nothing hatched, except alone

Successive broods of laughter;  
 It was a frail and dingy thing,  
 In which a grinder or two did cling,  
 In color like molasses,  
 Which surgeons, called from far and wide,  
 Upon the horror to decide,  
 Having put on their glasses,  
 Reported thus—"To judge by looks,  
 These bones, by some queer hooks or  
 crooks,  
*May* have belonged to Mr. Snooks,  
 But, as men deepest-read in books  
 Are perfectly aware, bones,  
 If buried fifty years or so,  
 Lose their identity and grow  
 From human bones to bare bones."

Still, if to Jaalam you go down,  
 You'll find two parties in the town,  
 One headed by Benaiah Brown,  
 And one by Perez Tiukham;  
 The first believe the ghosts all through  
 And vow that they shall never rue  
 The happy chance by which they knew  
 That people in Jupiter are blue,  
 And very fond of Irish stew,  
 Two curious facts which Prince Lee Boo  
 Rapped clearly to a chosen few—  
 Whereas the others think 'em  
 A trick got up by Doctor Slade  
 With Deborah the chamber-maid  
 And that sly cretur Jinny.  
 That all the revelations wise,  
 At which the Brownites made big eyes,  
 Might have been given by Jared Keyes,  
 A natural fool and ninny,  
 And, last week, did n't Eliab Snooks  
 Come back with never better looks,  
 As sharp as new-bought mackerel hooks  
 And bright as a new pin, eh?  
 Good Parson Wilbur, too, avers  
 (Though to be mixed in parish stirs  
 Is worse than handling chestnut-burrs)  
 That no case to his mind occurs  
 Where spirits ever did converse,  
 Save in a kind of guttural Erse,  
 (So say the best authorities;)  
 And that a charge by raps conveyed  
 Should be most scrupulously weighed  
 And searched into, before it is  
 Made public, since it may give pain  
 That cannot soon be cured again,  
 And one word may infix a stain  
 Which ten cannot gloss over,  
 Though speaking for his private part,  
 He is rejoiced with all his heart  
 Miss Knott missed not her lover.

## AN ORIENTAL APOLOGUE.

## I.

SOMEWHERE in India, upon a time,  
(Read it not Injah, or you spoil the  
verse,)

There dwelt two saints whose privilege  
sublime

It was to sit and watch the world grow  
worse,

Their only care (in that delicious  
clime)

At proper intervals to pray and curse ;  
Pracrit the dialect each prudent  
brother

Used for himself, Damnonian for the  
other.

## II.

One half the time of each was spent  
in praying  
For blessings on his own unworthy  
head,

The other half in fearfully portraying  
Where certain folks would go when they  
were dead ;

This system of exchanges — there's  
no saying

To what more solid barter 't would have  
led,

But that a river, vexed with boils and  
swellings

At rainy times, kept peace between  
their dwellings.

## III.

So they two played at wordy battle-  
dore

And kept a curse forever in the air,  
Flying this way or that from shore  
to shore ;

Nor other labor did this holy pair,  
Clothed and supported from the lavish  
store

Which crowds lanigerous brought with  
daily care ;

They toiled not neither did they spin ;  
their bias

Was tow'rd the harder task of being  
pious.

## IV.

Each from his hut rushed six score  
times a day,

Like a great canon of the Church full-  
rammed

With cartridge theologic, (so to say,)  
Touched himself off, and then, recoiling,  
slammed

His hovel's door behind him in a way  
That to his foe said plainly, — *you 'll*  
be damned ;

And so like Potts and Wainwright,  
shrill and strong

The two D—D'd each other all day  
long.

## V.

One was a dancing Dervise, a Mo-  
hammedan,

The other was a Hindoo, a gymnos-  
phist ;

One kept his whatd'yecallit and his  
Ramadan,

Laughing to scorn the sacred rites and  
laws of his

Transfluvial rival, who, in turn, called  
Ahmed an

Old top, and, as a clincher, shook across  
a fist

With nails six inches long, yet lifted  
not

His eyes from off his navel's mystic  
knot.

## VI.

“ Who whirls not round six thousand  
times an hour

Will go,” screamed Ahmed, “ to the  
evil place ;



May he eat dirt, and may the dog and  
 Giaour  
 Defile the graves of him and all his  
 race;  
 Allah loves faithful souls and gives  
 them power  
 To spin till they are purple in the face;  
 Some folks get you know what, but  
 he that pure is  
 Earns Paradise and ninety thousand  
 hours."

## VII.

"Upon the silver mountain, South  
 by East,  
 Sits Brahma fed upon the sacred bean;  
 He loves those men whose nails are  
 still increased,  
 Who all their lives keep ugly, foul, and  
 lean;  
 'T is of his grace that not a bird or  
 beast  
 Adorned with claws like mine was ever  
 seen;  
 The suns and stars are Brahma's  
 thoughts divine  
 Even as these trees I seem to see are  
 mine."

## VIII.

"Thou seem'st to see, indeed!"  
 roared Ahmed back;  
 "Were I but once across this plaguy  
 stream,  
 With a stout sapling in my hand, one  
 whack  
 On those lank ribs would rid thee of  
 that dream!  
 Thy Brahma-blasphemy is ipecac  
 To my soul's stomach; couldst thou  
 grasp the scheme  
 Of true redemption, thou wouldst  
 know that Deity  
 Whirls by a kind of blessed sponta-  
 neity.

## IX.

"And this it is which keeps our earth  
 here going  
 With all the stars." — "O, vile! but  
 there's a place  
 Prepared for such; to think of Brahma  
 throwing  
 Worlds like a juggler's balls up into  
 Space!  
 Why, not so much as a smooth lotos  
 blowing  
 Is e'er allowed that silence to efface

Which broods round Brahma, and  
 our earth, 't is known,  
 Rests on a tortoise, moveless as this  
 stone."

## X.

So they kept up their banning amœ-  
 bæan,  
 When suddenly came floating down the  
 stream  
 A youth whose face like an incarnate  
 pæan  
 Glowed, 't was so full of grandeur and  
 of gleam;  
 "If there be gods, then, doubtless,  
 this must be one,"  
 Thought both at once, and then began  
 to scream,  
 "Surely, whate'er immortals know,  
 thou knowest,  
 Decide between us twain before thou  
 goest!"

## XI.

The youth was drifting in a slim ca-  
 noe  
 Most like a huge white waterlily's petal,  
 But neither of our theologians knew  
 Whereof 't was made; whether of heav-  
 enly metal  
 Seldseen, or of a vast pearl split in  
 two  
 And hollowed, was a point they could  
 not settle;  
 'T was good debate-seed, though, and  
 bore large fruit  
 In after years of many a tart dispute.

## XII.

There were no wings upon the stran-  
 ger's shoulders  
 And yet he seemed so capable of rising  
 That, had he soared like thistledown,  
 beholders  
 Had thought the circumstance noways  
 surprising;  
 Enough that he remained, and, when  
 the scolders  
 Hailed him as umpire in their vocal  
 prize-ring,  
 The painter of his boat he lightly  
 threw  
 Around a lotos-stem, and brought her  
 to.

## XIII.

The strange youth had a look as if  
 he might

Have trod far planets where the atmos-  
phere  
(Of nobler temper) steeps the face  
with light,

Just as our skins are tanned and freck-  
led here ;

His air was that of a cosmopolite  
In the wide universe from sphere to  
sphere ;

Perhaps he was (his face had such  
grave beauty)

An officer of Saturn's guards off duty.

## XIV.

Both saints began to unfold their tales  
at once,

Both wished their tales, like simial  
ones, prehensile,

That they might seize his ear ; *fool !*  
*knave ! and dunce !*

Flew zigzag back and forth, like strokes  
of pencil

In a child's fingers ; voluble as duns,  
They jabbered like the stones on that  
immense hill

In the Arabian Nights ; until the  
stranger

Began to think his ear-drums in some  
danger.

## XV.

In general those who nothing have to  
say

Contrive to spend the longest time in  
doing it ;

They turn and vary it in every way,  
hashing it, stewing it, mincing it, *ra-  
gouting* it ;

Sometimes they keep it purposely at  
bay,

Then let it slip to be again pursuing it ;  
They drone it, groan it, whisper it  
and shout it,

Befute it, flout it, swear to 't, prove  
it, doubt it.

## XVI.

Our saints had practised for some  
thirty years ;

Their talk, beginning with a single stem,  
Spread like a banyan, sending down  
live piers,

Colonies of digression, and, in them,  
Germs of yet new dispersion ; once

by the ears,  
They could convey damnation in a hem,

And blow the pinch of premise-prim-  
ing off  
Long syllogistic batteries, with a  
cough.

## XVII.

Each had a theory that the human  
ear

A providential tunnel was, which led  
To a huge vacuum (and surely here  
They showed some knowledge of the  
general head),

For cant to be decanted through, a  
mere

Auricular canal or mill-race fed  
All day and night, in sunshine and in  
shower,

From their vast heads of milk-and-  
water-power.

## XVIII.

The present being a peculiar case,  
Each with unwonted zeal the other  
scouted,

Put his spurred hobby through its  
every pace,

Pished, pshawed, poohed, horribled,  
bahed, jeered, sneered, flouted,  
Sniffed, nonsensed, infideled, fudged,  
with his face

Looked scorn too nicely shaded to be  
shouted,

And, with each inch of person and of  
vesture,

Contrived to hint some most disdain-  
ful gesture.

## XIX.

At length, when their breath's end  
was come about,

And both could, now and then, just  
gasp "impostor !"

Holding their heads thrust mena-  
cingly out,

As staggering cocks keep up their fight-  
ing posture,

The stranger smiled and said, "Be-  
yond a doubt

'Tis fortunate, my friends, that you  
have lost your

United parts of speech, or it had been  
Impossible for me to get between.

## XX.

"Produce ! says Nature, — what have  
you produced ?"

A new strait-waistcoat for the human mind ;

Are you not limbed, nerved, jointed, arteried, juiced,

As other men ? yet, faithless to your kind,

Rather like noxious insects you are used

To puncture life's fair fruit, beneath the rind

Laying your creed-eggs whence in time there spring

Consumers new to eat and buzz and sting.

## XXI.

"Work ! you have no conception how 't will sweeten

Your views of Life and Nature, God and Man ;

Had you been forced to earn what you have eaten,

Your heaven had shown a less dyspeptic plan ;

At present your whole function is to eat ten

And talk ten times as rapidly as you can ;

Were your shape true to cosmogonic laws,

You would be nothing but a pair of jaws.

## XXII.

"Of all the useless beings in creation The earth could spare most easily you bakers

Of little clay gods, formed in shape and fashion

Precisely in the image of their makers ;

Why, it would almost move a saint to passion,

To see these blind and deaf, the hourly breakers

Of God's own image in their brother men,

Set themselves up to tell the how, where, when,

## XXIII.

"Of God's existence ; one's digestion's worse—

So makes a god of vengeance and of blood ;

Another, — but no matter, they reverse

Creation's plan, out of their own vile mud

Pat up a god, and burn, drown, hang, or curse

Whoever worships not ; each keeps his stud

Of texts which wait with saddle on and bridle

To hunt hown atheists to their ugly idol.

## XXIV.

"This, I perceive, has been your occupation ;

You should have been more usefully employed ;

All men are bound to earn their daily ration,

Where States make not that primal contract void

By cramps and limits ; simple devastation

Is the worm's task, and what he has destroyed

His monument ; creating is man's work

And that, too, something more than mist and murk."

## XXV.

So having said, the youth was seen no more,

And straightway our sage Brahmin, the philosopher,

Cried, "That was aimed at thee, thou endless bore,

Idle and useless as the growth of moss over

A rotting tree-trunk !" "I would square that score

Full soon," replied the Dervise, "could I cross over

And catch thee by the beard. Thy nails I'd trim

And make thee work, as was advised by him."

## XXVI.

"Work ? Am I not at work from morn till night

Sounding the deeps of oracles umbilical Which for man's guidance never come to light,

With all their various aptitudes, until I call ?"

"And I, do I not twirl from left to right



For conscience' sake? Is that no work?

Thou silly gull,  
He had thee in his eye; 't was Gabriel  
Sent to reward my faith, I know him  
well."

## XXVII.

"'T was Vishnu, thou vile whirligig!" and so  
The good old quarrel was begun anew;  
One would have sworn the sky was  
black as sloe,  
Had but the other dared to call it blue;  
Nor were the followers who fed them  
slow  
To treat each other with their curses,  
too,  
Each hating t' other (moves it tears or  
laughter?)  
Because he thought him sure of hell  
hereafter.

## XXVIII.

At last some genius built a bridge of  
boats  
Over the stream, and Ahmed's zealots  
filed  
Across, upon a mission to (cut throats  
And) spread religion pure and undefiled;  
They sowed the propagandist's wild-  
est oats,  
Cutting off all, down to the smallest  
child,  
And came back, giving thanks for  
such fat mercies,  
To find their harvest gone past prayers  
or curses.

## XXIX.

All gone except their saint's religious  
hops,  
Which he kept up with more than com-  
mon flourish;  
But these, however satisfying crops  
For the inner man, were not enough to  
nourish  
The body politic, which quickly drops  
Reserve in such sad junctures, and turns  
currish;  
So Ahmed soon got cursed for all the  
famine  
Where'er the popular voice could edge  
a damn in.

## XXX.

At first he pledged a miracle quite  
boldly,  
And, for a day or two, they growled and  
waited;  
But, finding that this kind of manna  
coldly  
Sat on their stomachs, they erelong be-  
rated  
The saint for still persisting in that  
old lie,  
Till soon the whole machine of saintship  
grated,  
Ran slow, creaked, stopped, and,  
wishing him in Tophet,  
They gathered strength enough to  
stone the prophet.

## XXXI.

Some stronger ones contrived (by  
eating leather,  
Their weaker friends, and one thing or  
another)  
The winter months of scarcity to  
weather;  
Among these was the late saint's younger  
brother,  
Who, in the spring, collecting them  
together,  
Persuaded them that Ahmed's holy  
pother  
Had wrought in their behalf, and that  
the place  
Of Saint should be continued to his  
race.

## XXXII.

Accordingly, 't was settled on the  
spot  
That Allah favored that peculiar breed;  
Beside, as all were satisfied, 't would  
not  
Be quite respectable to have the need  
Of public spiritual food forgot;  
And so the tribe, with proper forms, de-  
creed  
That he, and, failing him, his next of  
kin,  
Forever for the people's good should  
spin.

## FRAGMENTS OF AN UNFINISHED POEM.

**I AM** a man of forty, sirs, a native of  
 East Haddam,  
**And** have some reason to surmise that I  
 descend from Adam;  
**But** what's my pedigree to you? That  
 I will soon unravel;  
**I've** sucked my Haddam-Eden dry,  
 therefore desire to travel,  
**And**, as a natural consequence, presume  
 I need n't say,  
**I** wish to write some letters home and  
 have those letters p—  
**[I** spare the word suggestive of those  
 grim Next Morns that mount  
*Clump, clump*, the stairways of the brain  
 with — "*Sir, my small account,*"  
**And**, after every good we gain — Love,  
 Fame, Wealth, Wisdom — still,  
**As** punctual as a cuckoo clock, hold up  
 their little bill,  
**The** *garçons* in our Café of Life, by  
 dreaming us forgot —  
**Sitting**, like Homer's heroes, full and  
 musing God knows what, —  
**Till** they say, bowing, *S'il vous plait,*  
*voilà, Messieurs, la note!*]  
**I** would not hint at this so soon, but in  
 our callous day,  
**The** tollman Debt, who drops his bar  
 across the world's highway,  
**Great** Cæsar in mid-march would stop, if  
 Cæsar could not pay;  
**Pilgriming's** dearer than it was: men  
 cannot travel now  
**Scot-free** from Dan to Beersheba upon a  
 simple vow;  
**Nay**, as long back as Bess's time, when  
 Walsingham went over  
**Ambassador** to Cousin France, at Can-  
 terbury and Dover  
**He** was so fleeced by innkeepers that, ere  
 he quitted land,  
**He** wrote to the Prime Minister to take  
 the knaves in hand.

**If** I with staff and scallop-shell should  
 try my way to win,  
**Would** Bonifaces quarrel as to who  
 should take me in?  
**Or** would my pilgrim's progress end  
 where Bunyan started his on,  
**And** my grand tour be round and round  
 the back-yard of a prison?  
**I** give you here a saying deep and there-  
 fore, haply true;  
**'Tis** out of Merlin's prophecies, but  
 quite as good as new:  
**The** question boath for men and meates  
 longe voyages et beginne  
**Lyes** in a notshell, rather sage lyes in a  
 case of timne.  
**But**, though men may not travel now, as  
 in the Middle Ages,  
**With** self-sustaining retinues of little  
 gilt-edged pages,  
**Yet** one may manage pleasantly, wher-  
 e'er he likes to roam,  
**By** sending his small pages (at so much  
 per small page) home;  
**And** if a staff and scallop-shell won't  
 serve so well as then,  
**Our** outlay is about as small — just pa-  
 per, ink, and pen.  
**Be** thankful! Humbugs never die, more  
 than the wandering Jew;  
**Bankrupt**, they publish their own deaths,  
 slink for a while from view,  
**Then** take an *alias*, change the sign, and  
 the old trade renew;  
**Indeed**, 'tis wondrous how each Age,  
 though laughing at the Past,  
**Insists** on having its tight shoe made on  
 the same old last;  
**How** it is sure its system would break up  
 at once without  
**The** bunion which it *will* believe heredi-  
 tary gout;  
**How** it takes all its swans for geese, nay,  
 stranger yet and sadder,

Sees in its treadmill's fruitless jog a  
 heavenward Jacob's-ladder,  
 Shouts, *Lo, the Shining Heights are  
 reached! One moment more aspire!*  
 Trots into cramps its poor, dear legs,  
 gets never an inch the higher,  
 And, like the others, ends with pipe and  
 mug beside the fire.  
 There, 'tween each doze, it whiffs and  
 sips and watches with a sneer  
 The green recruits that trudge and sweat  
 where it had swinked whilere,  
 And sighs to think this soon spent zeal  
 should be in simple truth  
 The only interval between old Foggyhood  
 and Youth:  
 "Well," thus it muses, "well, what  
 odds? 'T is not for us to warn;  
 'T will be the same when we are dead,  
 and was ere we were born;  
 Without the Treadmill, too, how grind  
 our store of winter's corn?  
 Had we no stock, nor twelve per cent.  
 received from Treadmill shares,  
 We might . . . but these poor devils at  
 last will get our easy-chairs.  
 High aims and hopes have great rewards,  
 they, too, serene and snug,  
 Shall one day have their soothing pipe  
 and their enlivening mug;  
 From Adam, empty-handed Youth hath  
 always heard the hum  
 Of Good Times Coming, and will hear  
 until the last day come;  
 Young ears hear forward, old ones back,  
 and, while the earth rolls on,  
 Full-handed Eld shall hear recede the  
 steps of Good Times Gone;  
 Ah what a cackle we set up when'er an  
 egg was laid!  
*Cack-cack-cack-cackle!* rang around, the  
 scratch for worms was stayed,  
*Cut-cut-ca-dah-cut!* from *this* egg the  
 coming cock shall stalk!  
 The great New Era dawns, the age of  
 Deeds and not of Talk!  
 And every stupid hen of us hugged close  
 his egg of chalk,  
 Thought, — sure, I feel life stir within,  
 each day with greater strength,  
 When, lo, the chick! from former chicks  
 he differed not a jot,  
 But grew and crew and scratched and  
 went, like those before, to pot!"  
 So muse the dim *Emeriti*, and, mournful  
 though it be,  
 I must confess a kindred thought hath  
 sometimes come to me,

Who, though but just of forty turned,  
 have heard the rumorous fame  
 Of nine and ninety Coming Men, all—  
 coming till they came.  
 Pure Mephistopheles all this? the vulgar  
 nature jeers?  
 Good friend, while I was writing it, my  
 eyes were dim with tears;  
 Thrice happy he who cannot see, or who  
 his eyes can shut,  
 Life's deepest sorrow is contained in that  
 small word there — But!  
 . . . . .  
 We're pretty nearly crazy here with  
 change and go ahead,  
 With flinging our caught bird away for  
 two i' th' bush instead,  
 With butting 'gainst the wall which we  
 declare *shall* be a portal,  
 And questioning Deeps that never yet  
 have oped their lips to mortal;  
 We're growing pale and hollow-eyed,  
 and out of all condition,  
 With *mediums* and prophetic chairs, and  
 crickets with a mission,  
 (The most astounding oracles since Ba-  
 laam's donkey spoke, —  
 'T would seem our furniture was all of  
 Dodonean oak.)  
 Make but the public laugh, be sure  
 't will take you to be somebody;  
 'T will wrench its button from your  
 clutch, my densely earnest glum  
 body;  
 'T is good, this noble earnestness, good  
 in its place, but why  
 Make great Achilles' shield the pan to  
 bake a penny pie?  
 Why, when we have a kitchen-range, in-  
 sist that we shall stop,  
 And bore clear down to central fires to  
 broil our daily chop?  
 Excalibur and Durandart are swords of  
 price, but then  
 Why draw them sternly when you wish  
 to trim your nails or pen?  
 Small gulf between the ape and man;  
 you bridge it with your staff;  
 But it will be impassable until the ape  
 can laugh; —  
 No, no, be common now and then, be sen-  
 sible, be funny,  
 And, as Siberians bait their traps for  
 bears with pots of honey,  
 From which, ere they'll withdraw their  
 snouts, they'll suffer many a club  
 lick,



So bait your moral figure-of-fours to  
catch the Orson public.

Look how the dead leaves melt their  
way down through deep-drifted  
snow;

They take the sun-warmth down with  
them — pearls could not conquer  
so;

There is a moral here, you see; if you  
would preach, you must

Steep all your truths in sunshine would  
you have them pierce the crust;

Brave Jeremiah, you are grand and ter-  
rible, a sign

And wonder, but were never quite a pop-  
ular divine;

Fancy the figure you would cut among  
the nuts and wine!

I, on occasion, too, could preach, but  
hold it wiser far

To give the public sermons it will take  
with its cigar,

And morals fugitive, and vague as are  
these smoke-wreaths light

In which . . . I trace . . . a . . . let me  
see — bless me! 't is out of sight.

. . . . .

There are some goodish things at sea;  
for instance, one can feel

A grandeur in the silent man forever at  
the wheel,

That bit of two-legged intellect, that  
particle of drill,

Who the huge floundering hulk inspires  
with reason, brain, and will,

And makes the ship, though skies are  
black and headwinds whistle loud,

Obey her conscience there which feels  
the loadstar through the cloud;

And when by lusty western gales the  
full-sailed barque is hurled

Towards the great moon which, setting  
on the silent underworld,

Rounds luridly up to look on ours, and  
shoots a broadening line,

Of palpitant light from crest to crest  
across the ridgy brine,

Then from the bows look back and feel  
a thrill that never stales,

In that full-bosomed, swan-white pomp  
of onward-yearning sails;

Ah, when dear cousin Bull laments that  
you can't make a poem,

Take him aboard a clipper-ship, young  
Jonathan, and show him

A work of art that in its grace and gran-  
deur may compare

With any thing that any race has fash-  
ioned any where;

'T is not a statue, grumbles John; nay, if  
you come to that,

We think of Hyde Park Corner, and  
concede you beat us flat

With your equestrian statue to a Nose  
and a Cocked-hat;

But 't is not a cathedral; well, e'en that  
we will allow,

Both statues and cathedrals are anachro-  
nistic now;

Your minsters, coz, the monuments of  
men who conquered you,

You 'd sell a bargain, if we 'd take the  
deans and chapters too;

No; mortal men build nowadays, as al-  
ways heretofore,

Good temples to the gods which they in  
very truth adore;

The shepherds of this Broker Age, with  
all their willing flocks,

Although they bow to stones no more,  
do bend the knee to stocks,

And churches can't be beautiful though  
crowded, floor and gallery,

If people worship preacher, and if  
preacher worship salary;

'T is well to look things in the face, 'the  
god o' the modern universe,

Hermes, cares naught for halls of art  
and libraries of puny verse,

If they don't sell, he notes them thus  
upon his ledger — say, *per*

*Contra* to a loss of so much stone, best  
Russia duck and paper;

And, after all, about this Art men talk a  
deal of fudge,

Each nation has its path marked out,  
from which it must not budge;

The Romans had as little art as Noah in  
his ark,

Yet somehow on this globe contrived to  
make an epic mark;

Religion, painting, sculpture, song, — for  
these they ran up jolly ticks

With Greece and Egypt, but they were  
great artists in their politics,

And if we make no minsters, John, nor  
epics, yet the Fates

Are not entirely deaf to men who *can*  
build ships and states;

The arts are never pioneers, but men  
have strength and health

Who, called on suddenly, can improvise  
a commonwealth,

Nay, can more easily go on and frame  
them by the dozen,

<p>Than you can make a dinner-speech,          dear sympathizing cousin :</p> <p>And, though our restless Jonathan have          not your graver bent, sure he</p> <p>Does represent this hand-to-mouth, pert,          rapid, nineteenth century ;</p> <p>This is the Age of Scramble ; men move          faster than they did</p> <p>When they pried up the imperial Past's          deep-dusted coffin-lid,</p> <p>Searching for scrolls of precedent ; the          wire-leashed lightning now</p> <p>Replaces Delphos — men don't leave the          steamer for the scow ;</p> <p>What public, were they new to-day,          would ever sto, to read</p> <p>The Iliad, the Shanà neh, or the Nibe-          lungenlied ?</p>	<p><i>Their</i> public's gone, the artist Greek, the          lettered Shah, the hairy Graf —</p> <p>Folio and plesiosaur sleep well ; we weary          o'er a paragraph ;</p> <p>The mind moves planet-like no more, it          fizzes, cracks, and bustles ;</p> <p>From end to end with journals dry the          land o'ershadowed rustles,</p> <p>As with dead leaves a winter-beech, and,          with their breath-roused jars</p> <p>Amused, we care not if they hide the          eternal skies and stars ;</p> <p>Down to the general level of the Board          of Brokers sinking,</p> <p>The Age takes in the newspapers, or, to          say sooth unshrinking,</p> <p>The newspapers take in the Age, and          stocks do all the thinking.</p>
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UNDER THE WILLOWS,

AND

OTHER POEMS.



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

1955

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

# UNDER THE WILLOWS.

TO CHARLES ELIOT NORTON.

AGRO DOLCE.

THE wind is roistering out of doors,  
My windows shake and my chimney  
roars ;  
My Elmwood chimneys seem crooning  
to me,  
As of old, in their moody, minor key,  
And out of the past the hoarse wind  
blows,  
As I sit in my arm-chair, and toast my  
toes.

"Ho! ho! nine-and-forty," they seem  
to sing,

"We saw you a little toddling thing.  
We knew you child and youth and man,  
A wonderful fellow to dream and plan,  
With a great thing always to come, —  
who knows?

Well, well! 't is some comfort to toast  
one's toes.

"How many times have you sat at gaze  
Till the mouldering fire forgot to blaze,  
Shaping among the whimsical coals  
Fancies and figures and shining goals!  
What matters the ashes that cover those?  
While hickory lasts you can toast your  
toes.

"O dream-ship-builder! where are they  
all,

Your grand three-deckers, deep-chested  
and tall,

That should crush the waves under can-  
vas piles,

And anchor at last by the Fortunate  
Isles?

There's gray in your beard, the years  
turn foes,

While you muse in your arm-chair, and  
toast your toes."

I sit and dream that I hear, as of yore,  
My Elmwood chimneys' deep-throated  
roar ;

If much be gone, there is much remains ;  
By the embers of loss I count my gains,  
You and yours with the best, till the  
old hope glows

In the fanciful flame, as I toast my toes.

Instead of a fleet of broad-browed ships,  
To send a child's armada of chips !

Instead of the great guns, tier on tier,  
A freight of pebbles and grass-blades  
sere !

"Well, maybe more love with the less  
gift goes,"

I growl, as, half moody, I toast my toes.

## UNDER THE WILLOWS.

FRANK-HEARTED hostess of the field and  
wood,

Gypsy, whose roof is every spreading  
tree,

June is the pearl of our New England  
year.

Still a surprisal, though expected long,  
Her coming startles. Long she lies in  
wait,

Makes many a feint, peeps forth, draws  
coily back,

Then, from some southern ambush in  
the sky,

With one great gush of blossom storms  
the world.

A week ago the sparrow was divine ;  
The bluebird, shifting his light load of  
song

From post to post along the cheerless  
fence,

Was as a rhymer ere the poet come ;  
But now, O rapture ! sunshine winged  
and voiced,

Pipe blown through by the warm wild  
 breath of the West  
 Shepherding his soft droves of fleecy  
 cloud,  
 Gladness of woods, skies, waters, all in  
 one,  
 The boblink has come, and, like the  
 soul  
 Of the sweet season vocal in a bird,  
 Gurgles in ecstasy we know not what  
 Save *June! Dear June! Now God be  
 praised for June.*

May is a pious fraud of the almanac,  
 A ghastly parody of real Spring  
 Shaped out of snow and breathed with  
 eastern wind;  
 Or if, o'er-confident, she trust the date,  
 And, with her handful of anemones,  
 Herself as shivery, steal into the sun,  
 The season need but turn his hourglass  
 round,  
 And Winter suddenly, like crazy Lear,  
 Reels back, and brings the dead May in  
 his arms,  
 Her budding breasts and wan dislusted  
 front  
 With frosty streaks and drifts of his  
 white beard  
 All overblown. Then, warmly walled  
 with books,  
 While my wood-fire supplies the sun's  
 defect,  
 Whispering old forest-sagas in its  
 dreams,  
 I take my May down from the happy  
 shelf  
 Where perch the world's rare song-birds  
 in a row,  
 Waiting my choice to open with full  
 breast,  
 And beg an alms of spring-time, ne'er  
 denied  
 In-doors by vernal Chaucer, whose fresh  
 woods  
 Throb thick with merle and mavis all  
 the year.

July breathes hot, sallows the crispy  
 fields,  
 Curls up the wan leaves of the lilac-  
 hedge,  
 And every eve cheats us with show of  
 clouds  
 That braise the horizon's western rim, or  
 hang

Motionless, with heaped canvas drooping  
 idly,  
 Like a dim fleet by starving men be-  
 sieged,  
 Conjectured half, and half descried  
 afar,  
 Helpless of wind, and seeming to slip  
 back  
 Adown the smooth curve of the oily  
 sea.

But June is full of invitations sweet,  
 Forth from the chimney's yawn and  
 thrice-read tomes  
 To leisurely delights and sauntering  
 thoughts  
 That brook no ceiling narrower than the  
 blue.  
 The cherry, drest for bridal, at my pane  
 Brushes, then listens, *Will he come?*  
 The bee,  
 All dusty as a miller, takes his toll  
 Of powdery gold, and grumbles. What  
 a day  
 To sun me and do nothing! Nay, I  
 think  
 Merely to bask and ripen is sometimes  
 The student's wiser business; the brain  
 That forages all climes to line its cells,  
 Ranging both worlds on lightest wings  
 of wish,  
 Will not distil the juices it has sucked  
 To the sweet substance of pellucid  
 thought,  
 Except for him who hath the secret  
 learned  
 To mix his blood with sunshine, and to  
 take  
 The winds into his pulses. Hush!  
 't is he!  
 My oriole, my glance of summer fire,  
 Is come at last, and, ever on the watch,  
 Twitches the pack-thread I had lightly  
 wound  
 About the bough to help his housekeep-  
 ing,—  
 Twitches and scouts by turns, blessing  
 his luck,  
 Yet fearing me who laid it in his way,  
 Nor, more than wiser we in our affairs,  
 Divines the providence that hides and  
 helps.  
*Heave, ho! Heave, ho!* he whistles as  
 the twine  
 Slackens its hold; *once more, now!* and  
 a flash  
 Lightens across the sunlight to the elm



Where his mate dangles at her cup of  
felt.

Nor all his booty is the thread; he trails  
My loosened thought with it along the  
air,

And I must follow, would I ever find  
The inward rhyme to all this wealth of  
life.

I care not how men trace their ancestry,  
To ape or Adam; let them please their  
whim;

But I in June am midway to believe  
A tree among my far progenitors,  
Such sympathy is mine with all the  
race,

Such mutual recognition vaguely sweet  
There is between us. Surely there are  
times

When they consent to own me of their  
kin,

And condescend to me, and call me  
cousin,

Murmuring faint lullabies of eldest time,  
Forgotten, and yet dumbly felt with  
thrills

Moving the lips, though fruitless of all  
words.

And I have many a lifelong leafy friend,  
Never estranged nor careful of my soul,  
That knows I hate the axe, and wel-  
comes me

Within his tent as if I were a bird,  
Or other free companion of the earth,  
Yet undegenerate to the shifts of men.  
Among them one, an ancient willow,  
spreads

Eight balanced limbs, springing at once  
all round

His deep-ridged trunk with upward slant  
diverse,

In outline like enormous beaker, fit  
For hand of Jotun, where mid snow  
and mist

He holds unwieldy revel. This tree,  
spared,

I know not by what grace,—for in the  
blood

Of our New World subduers lingers yet  
Hereditary feud with trees, they being  
(They and the red-man most) our fathers'  
foes,—

Is one of six, a willow Pleiades,  
The seventh fallen, that lean along the  
brink

Where the steep upland dips into the  
marsh,

Their roots, like molten metal cooled in  
flowing,

Stiffened in coils and runnels down the  
bank.

The friend of all the winds, wide-armed  
he towers

And glints his steely aglets in the  
sun,

Or whitens fitfully with sudden bloom  
Of leaves breeze-lifted, much as when a  
shoal

Of devious minnows wheel from where a  
pike

Lurks balanced 'neath the lily-pads, and  
whirl

A rood of silver bellies to the day.

Alas! no acorn from the British oak  
'Neath which slim fairies tripping  
wrought those rings

Of greenest emerald, wherewith fireside  
life

Did with the invisible spirit of Nature  
wed,

Was ever planted here! No darnel  
fancy

Might choke one useful blade in Puri-  
tan fields;

With horn and hoof the good old Devil  
came,

The witch's broomstick was not contra-  
band,

But all that superstition had of fair,  
Or piety of native sweet, was doomed.

And if there be who nurse unholy faiths,  
Fearing their god as if he were a  
wolf

That snuffed round every home and was  
not seen,

There should be some to watch and keep  
alive

All beautiful beliefs. And such was  
that,—

By solitary shepherd first surmised  
Under Thessalian oaks, loved by some  
maid

Of royal stirp, that silent came and van-  
ished,

As near her nest the hermit thrush, nor  
dared

Confess a mortal name,—that faith  
which gave

A Hamadryad to each tree; and I  
Will hold it true that in this willow  
dwells

The open-handed spirit, frank and  
blithe,

Of ancient Hospitality, long since,  
With ceremonious thrift, bowed out of  
doors.

In June 't is good to lie beneath a  
tree  
While the blithe season comforts every  
sense,  
Steeps all the brain in rest, and heals  
the heart,  
Brimming it o'er with sweetness un-  
wares,  
Fragrant and silent as that rosy snow  
Wherewith the pitying apple-tree fills  
up  
And tenderly lines some last-year robin's  
nest.

There muse I of old times, old hopes,  
old friends, —  
Old friends! The writing of those  
words has borne  
My fancy backward to the gracious past,  
The generous past, when all was pos-  
sible,  
For all was then untried; the years be-  
tween

Have taught some sweet, some bitter  
lessons, none  
Wiser than this, — to spend in all things  
else,

But of old friends to be most miserly.  
Each year to ancient friendships adds a  
ring,

As to an oak, and precious more and  
more,  
Without deservingness or help of ours,  
They grow, and, silent, wider spread,  
each year,  
Their unbought ring of shelter or of  
shade.

Sacred to me the lichens on the bark,  
Which Nature's milliners would scrape  
away;

Most dear and sacred every withered  
limb!

'T is good to set them early, for our  
faith

Pines as we age, and, after wrinkles  
come,

Few plant, but water dead ones with  
vain tears.

This willow is as old to me as life;  
And under it full often have I stretched,  
Feeling the warm earth like a thing  
alive,  
And gathering virtue in at every pore

Till it possessed me wholly, and thought  
ceased,

Or was transfused in something to which  
thought

Is coarse and dull of sense. Myself was  
lost,

Gone from me like an ache, and what  
remained

Become a part of the universal joy.

My soul went forth, and, mingling with  
the tree,

Danced in the leaves; or, floating in  
the cloud,

Saw its white double in the stream be-  
low;

Or else, sublimed to purer ecstasy,

Dilated in the broad blue over all.

I was the wind that dappled the lush  
grass,

The tide that crept with coolness to its  
roots,

The thin-winged swallow skating on  
the air;

The life that gladdened everything was  
mine.

Was I then truly all that I beheld?

Or is this stream of being but a glass

Where the mind sees its visionary self,

As, when the kingfisher flits o'er his  
bay,

Across the river's hollow heaven below

His picture flits, — another, yet the  
same?

But suddenly the sound of human voice  
Or footfall, like the drop a chemist  
pours,

Doth in opacous cloud precipitate

The consciousness that seemed but now  
dissolved

Into an essence rarer than its own,

And I am narrowed to myself once more.

For here not long is solitude secure,

Nor Fantasy left vacant to her spell.

Here, sometimes, in this paradise of  
shade,

Rippled with western winds, the dusty  
Tramp,

Seeing the treeless causeway burn beyond,

Halts to unroll his bundle of strange  
food

And munch an unearned meal. I can-  
not help

Liking this creature, lavish Summer's  
bedesman,

Who from the almshouse steals when  
nights grow warm,

Himself his large estate and only charge,  
 To be the guest of haystack or of hedge,  
 Nobly superior to the household gear  
 That forfeits us our privilege of nature.  
 I bait him with my match-box and my  
 pouch,  
 Nor grudge the uncostly sympathy of  
 smoke,  
 His equal now, divinely unemployed.  
 Some smack of Robin Hood is in the  
 man,  
 Some secret league with wild wood-  
 wandering things;  
 He is our ragged Duke, our barefoot  
 Earl,  
 By right of birth exonerate from toil,  
 Who levies rent from us his tenants all,  
 And serves the state by merely being.  
 Here  
 The Scissors-grinder, pausing, doffs his  
 hat,  
 And lets the kind breeze, with its deli-  
 cate fan,  
 Winnow the heat from out his dank  
 gray hair, —  
 A grimy Ulysses, a much-wandered man,  
 Whose feet are known to all the popu-  
 lous ways,  
 And many men and manners he hath  
 seen,  
 Not without fruit of solitary thought.  
 He, as the habit is of lonely men, —  
 Unused to try the temper of their mind  
 In fence with others, — positive and shy,  
 Yet knows to put an edge upon his  
 speech,  
 Pithily Saxon in unwilling talk.  
 Him I entrap with my long-suffering  
 knife,  
 And, while its poor blade hums away in  
 sparks,  
 Sharpen my wit upon his gritty mind,  
 In motion set obsequious to his wheel,  
 And in its quality not much unlike.

Nor wants my tree more punctual vis-  
 itors.  
 The children, they who are the only rich,  
 Creating for the moment, and possessing  
 Whate'er they choose to feign, — for  
 still with them  
 Kind Fancy plays the fairy godmother,  
 Strewing their lives with cheap material  
 For winged horses and Aladdin's lamps,  
 Pure elfin-gold, by manhood's touch  
 profane  
 To dead leaves disenchanting, — long ago

Between the branches of the tree fixed  
 seats,  
 Making an o'erturned box their table.  
 Oft  
 The shrilling girls sit here between  
 school hours,  
 And play at *What's my thought like?*  
 while the boys,  
 With whom the age chivalric ever bides,  
 Pricked on by knightly spur of female  
 eyes,  
 Climb high to swing and shout on peril-  
 ous boughs,  
 Or, from the willow's armory equipped  
 With musket dumb, green banner, edge-  
 less sword,  
 Make good the rampart of their tree-  
 redoubt  
 'Gainst eager British storming from be-  
 low,  
 And keep alive the tale of Bunker's  
 Hill.

Here, too, the men that mend our vil-  
 lage ways,  
 Vexing Macadam's ghost with pounded  
 slate,  
 Their nooning take; much noisy talk  
 they spend  
 On horses and their ills; and, as John  
 Bull  
 Tells of Lord This or That, who was his  
 friend,  
 So these make boast of intimacies long  
 With famous teams, and add large esti-  
 mates,  
 By competition swelled from mouth to  
 mouth,  
 Of how much they could draw, till one,  
 ill pleased  
 To have his legend overbid, retorts:  
 "You take and stretch truck-horses in  
 a string  
 From here to Long Wharf end, one  
 thing I know,  
 Not heavy neither, they could never  
 draw, —  
 Ensign's long bow!" Then laughter  
 loud and long.  
 So they in their leaf-shadowed micro-  
 cosm  
 Image the larger world; for wheresoe'er  
 Ten men are gathered, the observant eye  
 Will find mankind in little, as the stars  
 Glide up and set, and all the heavens  
 revolve  
 In the small welkin of a drop of dew.



I love to enter pleasure by a postern,  
 Not the broad popular gate that gulps  
 the mob;  
 To find my theatres in roadside nooks,  
 Where men are actors, and suspect it  
 not;  
 Where Nature all unconscious works  
 her will,  
 And every passion moves with easy  
 gait,  
 Unhampered by the buskin or the train.  
 Hating the crowd, where we gregarious  
 men  
 Lead lonely lives, I love society,  
 Nor seldom find the best with simple  
 souls  
 Unswerved by culture from their native  
 bent,  
 The ground we meet on being primal  
 man  
 And nearer the deep bases of our lives.  
  
 But O, half heavenly, earthly half, my  
 soul,  
 Canst thou from those late ecstasies  
 descend,  
 Thy lips still wet with the miraculous  
 wine  
 That transubstantiates all thy baser stuff  
 To such divinity that soul and sense,  
 Once more commingled in their source,  
 are lost, —  
 Canst thou descend to quench a vulgar  
 thirst  
 With the mere dregs and rinsings of the  
 world?  
 Well, if my nature find her pleasure  
 so,  
 I am content, nor need to blush; I  
 take  
 My little gift of being clean from God,  
 Not haggling for a better, holding it  
 Good as was ever any in the world,  
 My days as good and full of miracle.  
 I pluck my nutriment from any bush,  
 Finding out poison as the first men  
 did  
 By tasting and then suffering, if I must.  
 Sometimes my bush burns, and some-  
 times it is  
 A leafless wilding shivering by the wall;  
 But I have known when winter bar-  
 berries  
 Pricked the effeminate palate with sur-  
 prise  
 Of savor whose mere harshness seemed  
 divine.

O, benediction of the higher mood  
 And human-kindness of the lower! for  
 both  
 I will be grateful while I live, nor ques-  
 tion  
 The wisdom that hath made us what we  
 are,  
 With such large range as from the ale-  
 house bench  
 Can reach the stars and be with both at  
 home.  
 They tell us we have fallen on prosy  
 days,  
 Condemned to glean the leavings of  
 earth's feast  
 Where gods and heroes took delight of  
 old;  
 But though our lives, moving in one  
 dull round  
 Of repetition infinite, become  
 Stale as a newspaper once read, and  
 though  
 History herself, seen in her workshop,  
 seem  
 To have lost the art that dyed those  
 glorious panes,  
 Rich with memorial shapes of saint and  
 sage,  
 That pave with splendor the Past's  
 dusky aisles, —  
 Panes that enchant the light of common  
 day  
 With colors costly as the blood of  
 kings,  
 Till with ideal hues it edge our  
 thought, —  
 Yet while the world is left, while nature  
 lasts,  
 And man the best of nature, there shall  
 be  
 Somewhere contentment for these human  
 hearts,  
 Some freshness, some unused material  
 For wonder and for song. I lose myself  
 In other ways where solemn guide-posts  
 say,  
*This way to Knowledge, This way to  
 Repose,*  
 But here, here only, I am ne'er be-  
 trayed,  
 For every by-path leads me to my love.  
  
 God's passionless reformers, influences,  
 That purify and heal and are not seen,  
 Shall man say whence your virtue is, or  
 how  
 Ye make medicinal the wayside weed?

I know that sunshine, through whatever  
 rift  
 How shaped it matters not, upon my  
 walls  
 Paints discs as perfect-rounded as its  
 source,  
 And, like its antitype, the ray divine,  
 However finding entrance, perfect still,  
 Repeats the image unimpaired of God.

We, who by shipwreck only find the  
 shores  
 Of divine wisdom, can but kneel at  
 first ;  
 Can but exult to feel beneath our feet,  
 That long stretched vainly down the  
 yielding deeps,  
 The shock and sustenance of solid earth ;  
 Inland afar we see what temples gleam  
 Through immemorial stems of sacred  
 groves,  
 And we conjecture shining shapes there-  
 in ;  
 Yet for a space we love to wonder here  
 Among the shells and sea-weed of the  
 beach.

So mused I once within my willow-tent  
 One brave June morning, when the  
 bluff northwest,  
 Thrusting aside a dank and snuffling  
 day  
 That made us bitter at our neighbors'  
 sins,  
 Brimmed the great cup of heaven with  
 sparkling cheer  
 And roared a lusty stave ; the sliding  
 Charles,  
 Blue toward the west, and bluer and  
 more blue,  
 Living and lustrous as a woman's eyes  
 Look once and look no more, with south-  
 ward curve  
 Ran crinkling sunniness, like Helen's  
 hair  
 Glimpsed in Elysium, insubstantial  
 gold ;  
 From blossom-clouded orchards, far  
 away  
 The bobolink tinkled, the deep mead-  
 ows flowed  
 With multitudinous pulse of light and  
 shade  
 Against the bases of the southern hills,  
 While here and there a drowsy island  
 rick

Slept and its shadow slept ; the wooden  
 bridge  
 Thundered, and then was silent ; on the  
 roofs  
 The sun-warped shingles rippled with  
 the heat ;  
 Summer on field and hill, in heart and  
 brain,  
 All life washed clean in this high tide of  
 June.

## DARA.

WHEN Persia's sceptre trembled in a  
 hand  
 Wilted with harem-heats, and all the  
 land  
 Was hovered over by those vulture ills  
 That snuff decaying empire from afar,  
 Then, with a nature balanced as a star,  
 Dara arose, a shepherd of the hills.

He who had governed fleecy subjects  
 well  
 Made his own village by the selfsame  
 spell  
 Secure and quiet as a guarded fold ;  
 Then, gathering strength by slow and  
 wise degrees  
 Under his sway, to neighbor villages  
 Order returned, and faith and justice  
 old.

Now when it fortune'd that a king more  
 wise  
 Endued the realm with brain and hands  
 and eyes,  
 He sought on every side men brave and  
 just ;  
 And having heard our mountain shep-  
 herd's praise,  
 How he refilled the mould of elder days,  
 To Dara gave a satrapy in trust.

So Dara shepherded a province wide,  
 Nor in his viceroy's sceptre took more  
 pride  
 Than in his crook before ; but envy  
 finds  
 More food in cities than on mountains  
 bare ;  
 And the frank sun of natures clear and  
 rare  
 Breeds poisonous fogs in low and marish  
 minds.

Soon it was hissed into the royal ear,  
 That, though wise Dara's province, year  
 by year,  
 Like a great sponge, sucked wealth and  
 plenty up,  
 Yet, when he squeezed it at the king's  
 behest,  
 Some yellow drops, more rich than all  
 the rest,  
 Went to the filling of his private cup.

For proof, they said, that, wheresoe'er  
 he went,  
 A chest, beneath whose weight the camel  
 bent,  
 Went with him ; and no mortal eye had  
 seen  
 What was therein, save only Dara's  
 own ;  
 But, when 't was opened, all his tent  
 was known  
 To glow and lighten with heaped jewels'  
 sheen.

The King set forth for Dara's province  
 straight ;  
 There, as was fit, outside the city's gate,  
 The viceroy met him with a stately train,  
 And there, with archers circled, close at  
 hand,  
 A camel with the chest was seen to  
 stand :  
 The King's brow reddened, for the guilt  
 was plain.

"Open me here," he cried, "this treas-  
 ure-chest !"

'T was done ; and only a worn shepherd's  
 vest  
 Was found therein. Some blushed and  
 hung the head ;  
 Not Dara ; open as the sky's blue roof  
 He stood, and "O my lord, behold the  
 proof  
 • That I was faithful to my trust," he  
 said.

"To govern men, lo all the spell I had !  
 My soul in these rude vestments ever  
 clad  
 Still to the unstained past kept true and  
 leal,  
 Still on these plains could breathe her  
 mountain air,  
 And fortune's heaviest gifts serenely  
 bear,  
 Which bend men from their truth and  
 make them reel.

"For ruling wisely I should have small  
 skill,  
 Were I not lord of simple Dara still ;  
 That sceptre kept, I could not lose my  
 way."  
 Strange dew in royal eyes grew round  
 and bright,  
 And strained the throbbing lids ; before  
 't was night  
 Two added provinces blest Dara's sway.

#### THE FIRST SNOW-FALL.

THE snow had begun in the gloaming,  
 And busily all the night  
 Had been heaping field and highway  
 With a silence deep and white.

Every pine and fir and hemlock  
 Wore ermine too dear for an earl,  
 And the poorest twig on the elm-tree  
 Was ridged inch deep with pearl.

From sheds new-roofed with Carrara  
 Came Chanticleer's muffled crow,  
 The stiff rails softened to swan's-down,  
 And still fluttered down the snow.

I stood and watched by the window  
 The noiseless work of the sky,  
 And the sudden flurries of snow-birds,  
 Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn  
 Where a little headstone stood ;  
 How the flakes were folding it gently,  
 As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,  
 Saying, "Father, who makes it  
 snow ?"  
 And I told of the good All-father  
 Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snow-fall,  
 And thought of the leaden sky  
 That arched o'er our first great sorrow.  
 When that mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience  
 That fell from that cloud like snow,  
 Flake by flake, healing and hiding  
 The scar that renewed our woe.



And again to the child I whispered,

“The snow that husheth all,  
Darling, the merciful Father  
Alone can make it fall !”

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed  
her ;

And she, kissing back, could not  
know

That *my* kiss was given to her sister,  
Folded close under deepening snow.

### THE SINGING LEAVES.

#### A BALLAD.

##### I.

“WHAT fairings will ye that I bring ?”  
Said the King to his daughters three ;  
“For I to Vanity Fair am bound,  
Now say what shall they be ?”

Then up and spake the eldest daughter,  
That lady tall and grand :

“O, bring me pearls and diamonds great,  
And gold rings for my hand.”

Thereafter spake the second daughter,  
That was both white and red :

“For me bring silks that will stand  
alone,  
And a gold comb for my head.”

Then came the turn of the least daughter,  
That was whiter than thistle-down,

And among the gold of her blithesome  
hair  
Dim shone the golden crown.

“There came a bird this morning,  
And sang 'neath my bower eaves,  
Till I dreamed, as his music made me,  
'Ask thou for the Singing Leaves.’”

Then the brow of the King swelled  
crimson

With a flush of angry scorn :

“Well have ye spoken, my two eldest,  
And chosen as ye were born ;

“But she, like a thing of peasant race,  
That is happy binding the sheaves” ;

Then he saw her dead mother in her  
face,

And said, “Thou shalt have thy  
leaves.”

##### II.

He mounted and rode three days and  
nights

Till he came to Vanity Fair,  
And 't was easy to buy the gems and  
the silk,

But no Singing Leaves were there.

Then deep in the greenwood rode he,  
And asked of every tree,

“O, if you have ever a Singing Leaf,  
I pray you give it me !”

But the trees all kept their counsel,  
And never a word said they,

Only there sighed from the pine-tops  
A music of seas far away.

Only the pattering aspen  
Made a sound of growing rain,  
That fell ever faster and faster,  
Then faltered to silence again.

“O, where shall I find a little foot-page  
That would win both hose and shoon,  
And will bring to me the Singing Leaves  
If they grow under the moon ?”

Then lightly turned him Walter the  
page,

By the stirrup as he ran :

“Now pledge you me the truesome word  
Of a king and gentleman,

“That you will give me the first, first  
thing

You meet at your castle-gate,  
And the Princess shall get the Singing  
Leaves,  
Or mine be a traitor's fate.”

The King's head dropt upon his breast  
A moment, as it might be ;

“T will be my dog, he thought, and said,  
“My faith I plight to thee.”

Then Walter took from next his heart  
A packet small and thin,

“Now give you this to the Princess  
Anne,  
The Singing Leaves are therein.”

##### III.

As the King rode in at his castle-gate,  
A maiden to meet him ran,

And "Welcome, father!" she laughed  
and cried  
Together, the Princess Anne.

"Lo, here the Singing Leaves," quoth  
he,

"And woe, but they cost me dear!"  
She took the packet, and the smile  
Deepened down beneath the tear.

It deepened down till it reached her  
heart,

And then gushed up again,  
And lighted her tears as the sudden sun  
Transfigures the summer rain.

And the first Leaf, when it was opened,  
Sang: "I am Walter the page,  
And the songs I sing 'neath thy window  
Are my only heritage."

And the second Leaf sang: "But in the  
land

That is neither on earth or sea,  
My lute and I are lords of more  
Than thrice this kingdom's fee."

And the third Leaf sang, "Be mine!  
"Be mine!"

And ever it sang, "Be mine!"  
Then sweeter it sang and ever sweeter,  
And said, "I am thine, thine, thine!"

At the first Leaf she grew pale enough,  
At the second she turned aside,  
At the third, 't was as if a lily flushed  
With a rose's red heart's tide.

"Good counsel gave the bird," said she,  
"I have my hope thrice o'er,  
For they sing to my very heart," she  
said,

"And it sings to them evermore."

She brought to him her beauty and  
truth,

But and broad earldoms three,  
And he made her queen of the broader  
lands

He held of his lute in fee.  
1851.

#### SEA-WEED.

NOT always unimpeded can I pray,  
Nor, pitying saint, thine intercession  
claim;

Too closely clings the burden of the day,

And all the mint and anise that I pay  
But swells my debt and deepens my  
self-blame.

Shall I less patience have than Thou,  
who know

That Thou revisit'st all who wait for  
thee,  
Nor only fill'st the unsounded deeps  
below,  
But dost refresh with punctual overflow  
The rifts where unregarded mosses be?

The drooping sea-weed hears, in night  
abyssed,

Far and more far the wave's receding  
shocks,

Nor doubts, for all the darkness and the  
mist,

That the pale shepherdess will keep her  
tryst,

And shoreward lead again her foam-  
flecked flocks.

For the same wave that rims the Carib  
shore

With momentary brede of pearl and  
gold,

Goes hurrying thence to gladden with  
its roar

Lorn weeds bound fast on rocks of Lab-  
rador,

By love divine on one sweet errand  
rolled.

And, though Thy healing waters far  
withdraw,

I, too, can wait and feed on hope of  
Thee

And of the dear recurrence of Thy law,  
Sure that the parting grace my morning

saw  
Abides its time to come in search of me.  
1854.

#### THE FINDING OF THE LYRE.

THERE lay upon the ocean's shore  
What once a tortoise served to cover.  
A year and more, with rush and roar,  
The surf had rolled it over,  
Had played with it, and flung it by,  
As wind and weather might decide it,  
Then tossed it high where sand-drifts  
dry  
Cheap burial might provide it.

It rested there to bleach or tan,  
The rains had soaked, the suns had  
burned it;  
With many a ban the fisherman  
Had stumbled o'er and spurned it;  
And there the fisher-girl would stay,  
Conjecturing with her brother  
How in their play the poor estray  
Might serve some use or other.

So there it lay, through wet and dry,  
As empty as the last new sonnet,  
Till by and by came Mercury,  
And, having mused upon it,  
"Why, here," cried he, "the thing of  
things  
In shape, material, and dimension!  
Give it but strings, and, lo, it sings,  
A wonderful invention!"

So said, so done; the chords he strained,  
And, as his fingers o'er them hovered,  
The shell disdained a soul had gained,  
The lyre had been discovered.  
O empty world that round us lies,  
Dead shell, of soul and thought forsaken,  
Brought we but eyes like Mercury's,  
In thee what songs should waken!

## NEW-YEAR'S EVE. 1850.

THIS is the midnight of the century, —  
hark!  
Through aisle and arch of Godminster  
have gone  
Twelve throbs that tolled the zenith of  
the dark,  
And mornward now the starry hands  
move on;  
"Mornward!" the angelic watchers say,  
"Passed is the sorest trial;  
No plot of man can stay  
The hand upon the dial;  
Night is the dark stem of the lily Day."

If we, who watched in valleys here below,  
Toward streaks, misdeemed of morn, our  
faces turned  
When volcan glares set all the east  
aglow, —  
We are not poorer that we wept and  
yearned;  
Though earth swing wide from God's  
intent,

And though no man nor nation  
Will move with full consent  
In heavenly gravitation,  
Yet by one Sun is every orbit bent.

## FOR AN AUTOGRAPH.

THOUGH old the thought and oft ex-  
prest,  
'T is his at last who says it best, —  
I'll try my fortune with the rest.

Life is a leaf of paper white  
Whereon each one of us may write  
His word or two, and then comes night.

"Lo, time and space enough," we cry,  
"To write an epic!" so we try  
Our nibs upon the edge, and die.

Muse not which way the pen to hold,  
Luck hates the slow and loves the bold,  
Soon come the darkness and the cold.

Greatly begin! though thou have time  
But for a line, be that sublime, —  
Not failure, but low aim, is crime.

Ah, with what lofty hope we came!  
But we forget it, dream of fame,  
And scrawl, as I do here, a name.

## AL FRESCO.

THE dandelions and buttercups  
Gild all the lawn; the drowsy bee  
Stumbles among the clover-tops,  
And summer sweetens all but me:  
Away, unfruitful lore of books,  
For whose vain idiom we reject  
The soul's more native dialect,  
Aliens among the birds and brooks,  
Dull to interpret or conceive  
What gospels lost the woods retrieve!  
Away, ye critics, city-bred,  
Who springes set of thus and so,  
And in the first man's footsteps tread,  
Like those who toil through drifted  
snow!  
Away, my poets, whose sweet spell  
Can make a garden of a cell!  
I need ye not, for I to-day  
Will make one long sweet verse of play.



Snap, chord of manhood's tenser  
strain!

To-day I will be a boy again;  
The mind's pursuing element,  
Like a bow slackened and unbent,  
In some dark corner shall be leant.  
The robin sings, as of old, from the  
limb!

The catbird croons in the lilac-bush!  
Through the dim arbor, himself more  
dim,

Silently hops the hermit-thrush,  
The withered leaves keep dumb for him;  
The irreverent buccaneering bee  
Hath stormed and rifled the nunnery  
Of the lily, and scattered the sacred floor  
With haste-dropt gold from shrine to  
door;

There, as of yore,  
The rich, milk-tingeing buttercup  
Its tiny polished urn holds up,  
Filled with ripe summer to the edge,  
The sun in his own wine to pledge;  
And our tall elm, this hundredth year  
Doge of our leafy Venice here,  
Who, with an annual ring, doth wed  
The blue Adriatic overhead,  
Shadows with his palatial mass  
The deep canals of flowing grass.

O unstrangèd birds and bees!  
O face of Nature always true!  
O never-unsympathizing trees!  
O never-rejecting roof of blue,  
Whose rash disherison never falls  
On us unthinking prodigals,  
Yet who convictest all our ill,  
So grand and unappeasable!  
Methinks my heart from each of these  
Plucks part of childhood back again,  
Long there imprisoned, as the breeze  
Doth every hidden odor seize  
Of wood and water, hill and plain;  
Once more am I admitted peer  
In the upper house of Nature here,  
And feel through all my pulses run  
The royal blood of breeze and sun.

Upon these elm-arched solitudes  
No hum of neighbor toil intrudes;  
The only hammer that I hear  
Is wielded by the woodpecker,  
The single noisy calling his  
In all our leaf-hid Sybaris;  
The good old time, close-hidden here,  
Persists, a loyal cavalier,

While Roundheads prim, with point of  
fox,

Probe wainscot-chink and empty box;  
Here no hoarse-voiced iconoclast  
Insults thy statues, royal Past;  
Myself too prone the axe to wield,  
I touch the silver side of the shield  
With lance reversed, and challenge  
peace,

A willing convert of the trees.

How chanced it that so long I tost  
A cable's length from this rich coast,  
With foolish anchors hugging close  
The beckoning weeds and lazy ooze,  
Nor had the wit to wreck before  
On this enchanted island's shore,  
Whither the current of the sea,  
With wiser drift, persuaded me?

O, might we but of such rare days  
Build up the spirit's dwelling-place!  
A temple of so Parian stone  
Would brook a marble god alone,  
The statue of a perfect life,  
Far-shrined from earth's bestaining  
strife.

Alas! though such felicity  
In our next world here may not be,  
Yet, as sometimes the peasant's hut  
Shows stones which old religion cut  
With text inspired, or mystic sign  
Of the Eternal and Divine,  
Torn from the consecration deep  
Of some fallen nunnery's mossy sleep,  
So, from the ruins of this day  
Crumbling in golden dust away,  
The soul one gracious block may draw,  
Carved with some fragment of the law,  
Which, set in life's prosaic wall,  
Old benedictions may recall,  
And lure some nunlike thoughts to take  
Their dwelling here for memory's sake.

#### MASACCIO.

##### IN THE BRANCACCI CHAPEL-

HE came to Florence long ago,  
And painted here these walls, that shone  
For Raphael and for Angelo,  
With secrets deeper than his own,  
Then shrank into the dark again,  
And died, we know not how or when.

The shadows deepened, and I turned  
Half sadly from the fresco grand;

"And is this," mused I, "all ye earned,  
High-vaulted brain and cunning hand,  
That ye to greater men could teach  
The skill yourselves could never reach?"

"And who were they," I mused, "that  
wrought  
Through pathless wilds, with labor long,  
The highways of our daily thought?  
Who reared those towers of earliest song  
That lift us from the crowd to peace  
Remote in sunny silences?"

Out clanged the Ave Mary bells,  
And to my heart this message came:  
Each clamorous throat among them tells  
What strong-souled martyrs died in  
flame

To make it possible that thou  
Shouldst here with brother sinners bow.

Thoughts that great hearts once broke  
for, we

Breathe cheaply in the common air;  
The dust we trample heedlessly  
Throbbled once in saints and heroes rare,  
Who perished, opening for their race  
New pathways to the commonplace.

Henceforth, when rings the health to  
those

Who live in story and in song,  
O nameless dead, that now repose  
Safe in Oblivion's chambers strong,  
One cup of recognition true  
Shall silently be drained to you!

#### WITHOUT AND WITHIN.

My coachman, in the moonlight there,  
Looks through the side-light of the  
door;

I hear him with his brethren swear,  
As I could do, — but only more.

Flattening his nose against the pane,  
He envies me my brilliant lot,  
Breathes on his aching fists in vain.  
And dooms me to a place more hot.

He sees me in to supper go,  
A silken wonder by my side,  
Bare arms, bare shoulders, and a row  
Of flounces, for the door too wide.

He thinks how happy is my arm  
'Neath its white-gloved and jewelled  
load;

And wishes me some dreadful harm,  
Hearing the merry corks explode.

Meanwhile I inly curse the bore  
Of hunting still the same old coon,  
And envy him, outside the door,  
In golden quiets of the moon.

The winter wind is not so cold  
As the bright smile he sees me win,  
Nor the host's oldest wine so old  
As our poor gabble sour and thin.

I envy him the ungyved prance  
With which his freezing feet he warms,  
And drag my lady's-chains and dance  
The galley-slave of dreary forms.

O, could he have my share of din,  
And I his quiet! — past a doubt  
'T would still be one man bored within,  
And just another bored without.

Nay, when, once paid my mortal fee,  
Some idler on my headstone grim  
Traces the moss-blurred name, will he  
Think me the happier, or I him?

#### GODMINSTER CHIMES.

WRITTEN IN AID OF A CHIME OF BELLS  
FOR CHRIST CHURCH, CAMBRIDGE.

GODMINSTER? Is it Fancy's play?

I know not, but the word  
Sings in my heart, nor can I say  
Whether 't was dreamed or heard;  
Yet fragrant in my mind it clings  
As blossoms after rain,  
And builds of half-remembered things  
This vision in my brain.

Through aisles of long-drawn centuries  
My spirit walks in thought,  
And to that symbol lifts its eyes  
Which God's own pity wrought;  
From Calvary shines the altar's gleam,  
The Church's East is there,  
The Ages one great minster seem,  
That throbs with praise and prayer.

And all the way from Calvary down  
The carven pavement shows  
Their graves who won the martyr's  
crown

And safe in God repose;  
The saints of many a warring creed  
Who now in heaven have learned

That all paths to the Father lead  
Where Self the feet have spurned.

And, as the mystic aisles I pace,  
By aureoled workmen built,  
Lives ending at the Cross I trace  
Alike through grace and guilt;  
One Mary bathes the blessed feet  
With ointment from her eyes,  
With spikenard one, and both are sweet,  
For both are sacrifice.

Moravian hymn and Roman chant  
In one devotion blend,  
To speak the soul's eternal want  
Of Him, the inmost friend;  
One prayer soars cleansed with martyr  
fire,  
One choked with sinner's tears,  
In heaven both meet in one desire,  
And God one music hears.

Whilst thus I dream, the bells clash out  
Upon the Sabbath air,  
Each seems a hostile faith to shout,  
A selfish form of prayer;  
My dream is shattered, yet who knows  
But in that heaven so near  
These discords find harmonious close  
In God's atoning ear?

O chime of sweet Saint Charity,  
Peal soon that Easter morn  
When Christ for all shall risen be,  
And in all hearts new-born!  
That Pentecost when utterance clear  
To all men shall be given,  
When all shall say *My Brother* here,  
And hear *My Son* in heaven!

#### THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.

Who hath not been a poet? Who hath  
not,  
With life's new quiver full of winged  
years,  
Shot at a venture, and then, following  
on,  
Stood doubtful at the Parting of the  
Ways?

There once I stood in dream, and as I  
paused,  
Looking this way and that, came forth  
to me

The figure of a woman veiled, that said,  
"My name is Duty, turn and follow  
me";  
Something there was that chilled me in  
her voice;  
I felt Youth's hand grow slack and cold  
in mine,  
As if to be withdrawn, and I exclaimed:  
"O, leave the hot wild heart within my  
breast!  
Duty comes soon enough, too soon comes  
Death;  
This slippery globe of life whirls of itself,  
Hasting our youth away into the dark;  
These senses, quivering with electric  
heats,  
Too soon will show, like nests on wintry  
boughs  
Obtrusive emptiness, too palpable wreck,  
Which whistling north-winds line with  
downy snow  
Sometimes, or fringe with foliaged rime,  
in vain,  
Thither the singing birds no more re-  
turn."

Then glowed to me a maiden from the  
left,  
With bosom half disclosed, and naked  
arms  
More white and undulant than necks of  
swans;  
And all before her steps an influence ran  
Warm as the whispering South that  
opens buds  
And swells the laggard sails of Northern  
May.  
"I am called Pleasure, come with me!"  
she said,  
Then laughed, and shook out sunshine  
from her hair,  
Nor only that, but, so it seemed, shook  
out  
All memory too, and a! the moonlit  
past,  
Old loves, old aspirations, and old  
dreams,  
More beautiful for being old and gone.  
So we two went together; downward  
sloped  
The path through yellow meads, or so I  
dreamed,  
Yellow with sunshine and young green,  
but I  
Saw naught nor heard, shut up in one  
close joy;



I only felt the hand within my own,  
Transmuting all my blood to golden fire,  
Dissolving all my brain in throbbing  
mist.

Suddenly shrank the hand; suddenly  
burst

A cry that split the torpor of my brain,  
And as the first sharp thrust of lightning  
loosens

From the heaped cloud its rain, loosened  
my sense:

"Save me!" it thrilled; "O, hide me!  
there is Death!

Death the divider, the unmerciful,  
That digs his pitfalls under Love and  
Youth

And covers Beauty up in the cold  
ground;

Horrible Death! bringer of endless dark;  
Let him not see me! hide me in thy  
breast!"

Thereat I strove to clasp her, but my  
arms

Met only what slipped crumbling down,  
and fell,

A handful of gray ashes, at my feet.

I would have fled, I would have followed  
back

That pleasant path we came, but all was  
changed;

Rocky the way, abrupt, and hard to find;  
Yet I toiled on, and, toiling on, I  
thought,

"That way lies Youth, and Wisdom,  
and all Good;

For only by unlearning Wisdom comes  
And climbing backward to diviner  
Youth;

What the world teaches profits to the  
world,

What the soul teaches profits to the soul,  
Which then first stands erect with God-  
ward face,

When she lets fall her pack of withered  
facts,

The gleanings of the outward eye and  
ear,

And looks and listens with her finer  
sense;

Nor Truth nor Knowledge cometh from  
without."

After long weary days I stood again  
And waited at the Parting of the Ways;  
Again the figure of a woman veiled

Stood forth and beckoned, and I followed  
now:

Down to no bower of roses led the  
path,

But through the streets of towns where  
chattering Cold

Hewed wood for fires whose glow was  
owned and fenced,

Where Nakedness wove garments of  
warm wool

Not for itself;— or through the fields it  
led

Where Hunger reaped the unattainable  
grain,

Where Idleness enforced saw idle lands,  
Leagues of unpeopled soil, the common  
earth,

Walled round with paper against God  
and Man.

"I cannot look," I groaned, "at only  
these;

The heart grows hardened with perpet-  
ual wont,

And palters with a feigned necessity,  
Bargaining with itself to be content;  
Let me behold thy face."

The Form replied:

"Men follow Duty, never overtake;  
Duty nor lifts her veil nor looks behind."  
But, as she spake, a loosened lock of  
hair

Slipped from beneath her hood, and I,  
who looked

To see it gray and thin, saw amplest  
gold;

Not that dull metal dug from sordid  
earth,

But such as the retiring sunset flood  
Leaves heaped on bays and capes of  
island cloud.

"O Guide divine," I prayed, "although  
not yet

I may repair the virtue which I feel  
Gone out at touch of untuned things  
and foul

With draughts of Beauty, yet declare  
how soon!"

"Faithless and faint of heart," the voice  
returned,

"Thou see'st no beauty save thou make  
it first;

Man, Woman, Nature, each is but a  
glass

Where the soul sees the image of her-  
self,

Visible echoes, offsprings of herself.

But, since thou need'st assurance of how soon,  
Wait till that angel comes who opens all,  
The reconciler, he who lifts the veil,  
The reuniter, the rest-bringer, Death."

I waited, and methought he came ; but how,  
Or in what shape, I doubted, for no sign,  
By touch or mark, he gave me as he passed :  
Only I knew a lily that I held  
Snapt short below the head and shrivelled up ;  
Then turned my Guide and looked at me unveiled,  
And I beheld no face of matron stern,  
But that enchantment I had followed erst,  
Only more fair, more clear to eye and brain,  
Heightened and chastened by a household charm ;  
She smiled, and " Which is fairer," said her eyes,  
" The hag's unreal Florimel or mine ?"

## ALADDIN.

WHEN I was a beggarly boy,  
And lived in a cellar damp,  
I had not a friend nor a toy,  
But I had Aladdin's lamp ;  
When I could not sleep for the cold,  
I had fire enough in my brain,  
And builded, with roofs of gold,  
My beautiful castles in Spain !

Since then I have toiled day and night,  
I have money and power good store,  
But I'd give all my lamps of silver bright,  
For the one that is mine no more ;  
Take, Fortune, whatever you choose,  
You gave, and may snatch again ;  
I have nothing 't would pain me to lose,  
For I own no more castles in Spain !

## AN INVITATION.

TO J. F. H.

NINE years have slipt like hour-glass sand  
From life's still-emptying globe away,

Since last, dear friend, I clasped your hand,  
And stood upon the impoverished land,  
Watching the steamer down the bay.

I held the token which you gave,  
While slowly the smoke-pennon curled  
O'er the vague rim 'tween sky and wave,  
And shut the distance like a grave,  
Leaving me in the colder world.

The old worn world of hurry and heat,  
The young, fresh world of thought and scope,  
While you, where beckoning billows fleet  
Climb far sky-beaches still and sweet,  
Sank wavering down the ocean-slope.

You sought the new world in the old,  
I found the old world in the new,  
All that our human hearts can hold,  
The inward world of deathless mould,  
The same that Father Adam knew.

He needs no ship to cross the tide,  
Who, in the lives about him, sees  
Fair window-prospects opening wide  
O'er history's fields on every side,  
To Ind and Egypt, Rome and Greece.

Whatever moulds of various brain  
E'er shaped the world to weal or woe,  
Whatever empires' wax and wane,  
To him that hath not eyes in vain,  
Our village-microcosm can show.

Come back our ancient walks to tread,  
Dear haunts of lost or scattered friends,  
Old Harvard's scholar-factories red,  
Where song and smoke and laughter sped  
The nights to proctor-haunted ends.

Constant are all our former loves,  
Unchanged the icehouse-girdled pond,  
Its hemlock glooms, its shadowy coves,  
Where floats the coot and never moves,  
Its slopes of long-tamed green beyond.

Our old familiars are not laid,  
Though snapt our wands and sunk our books ;  
They beckon, not to be gainsaid,  
Where, round broad meads that mowers wade,  
The Charles his steel-blue sickle crooks.

Where, as the cloudbergs eastward blow,  
From glow to gloom the hillsides shift  
Their plumps of orchard-trees arow,  
Their lakes of rye that wave and flow,  
Their snowy whiteweed's summer drift.

There have we watched the West unfurl  
A cloud Byzantium newly born,  
With flickering spires and domes of  
pearl,  
And vapory surfs that crowd and curl  
Into the sunset's Golden Horn.

There, as the flaming occident  
Burned slowly down to ashes gray,  
Night pitched o'erhead her silent tent,  
And glimmering gold from Hesper sprent  
Upon the darkened river lay,

Where a twin sky but just before  
Deepened, and doubleswallows skimmed,  
And, from a visionary shore,  
Hung visioned trees, that more and  
more  
Grew dusk as those above were dimmed.

Then eastward saw we slowly grow  
Clear-edged the lines of roof and spire,  
While great elm-masses blacken slow,  
And linden-ricks their round heads  
show  
Against a flush of widening fire.

Doubtful at first and far away,  
The moon-flood creeps more wide and  
wide ;  
Up a ridged beach of cloudy gray,  
Curved round the east as round a bay,  
It slips and spreads its gradual tide.

Then suddenly, in lurid mood,  
The moon looms large o'er town and  
field  
As upon Adam, red like blood,  
'Tween him and Eden's happy wood,  
Glared the commissioned angel's shield.

Or let us seek the seaside, there  
To wander idly as we list,  
Whether, on rocky headlands bare,  
Sharp cedar-horns, like breakers, tear  
The trailing fringes of gray mist,

Or whether, under skies full flown,  
The brightening surfs, with foamy din,  
Their breeze-caught forelocks backward  
blown,

Against the beach's yellow zone,  
Curl slow, and plunge forever in.

And, as we watch those canvas towers  
That lean along the horizon's rim,  
"Sail on," I'll say ; "may sunniest  
hours  
Convoy you from this land of ours,  
Since from my side you bear not him !"

For years thrice three, wise Horace said,  
A poem rare let silence bind ;  
And love may ripen in the shade,  
Like ours, for nine long seasons laid  
In deepest arches of the mind.

Come back ! Not ours the Old World's  
good,  
The Old World's ill, thank God, not  
ours ;  
But here, far better understood,  
The days enforce our native mood,  
And challenge all our manlier powers.

Kindlier to me the place of birth  
That first my tottering footsteps trod ;  
There may be fairer spots of earth,  
But all their glories are not worth  
The virtue in the native sod.

Thence climbs an influence more benign  
Through pulse and nerve, through heart  
and brain ;  
Sacred to me those fibres fine  
That first clasped earth. O, ne'er be  
mine  
The alien sun and alien rain !

These nourish not like homelier glows  
Or waterings of familiar skies,  
And nature fairer blooms bestows  
On the heaped hush of wintry snows,  
In pastures dear to childhood's eyes,

Than where Italian earth receives  
The partial sunshine's ampler boons,  
Where vines carve friezes 'neath the  
eaves,  
And, in dark firmaments of leaves,  
The orange lifts its golden moons.

#### THE NOMADES.

WHAT Nature makes in any mood  
To me is warranted for good,  
Though long before I learned to see  
She did not set us moral theses,



And scorned to have her sweet caprices  
Strait-waistcoated in you or me.

I, who take root and firmly cling,  
Thought fixedness the only thing;  
Why Nature made the butterflies,  
(Those dreams of wings that float and  
hover  
At noon the slumberous poppies over,)  
Was something hidden from mine eyes,

Till once, upon a rock's brown bosom,  
Bright as a thorny cactus-blossom,  
I saw a butterfly at rest;  
Then first of both I felt the beauty;  
The airy whim, the grim-set duty,  
Each from the other took its best.

Clearer it grew than winter sky  
That Nature still had reasons why;  
And, shifting sudden as a breeze,  
My fancy found no satisfaction,  
No antithetic sweet attraction,  
So great as in the Nomades.

Scythians, with Nature not at strife,  
Light Arabs of our complex life,  
They build no houses, plant no mills  
To utilize Time's sliding river,  
Content that it flow waste forever,  
If they, like it, may have their wills.

An hour they pitch their shifting tents  
In thoughts, in feelings, and events;  
Beneath the palm-trees, on the grass,  
They sing, they dance, make love, and  
chatter,

Vex the grim temples with their clatter,  
And make Truth's fount their looking-  
glass.

A picnic life; from love to love,  
From faith to faith they lightly move,  
And yet, hard-eyed philosopher,  
The flightiest maid that ever hovered  
To me your thought-webs fine discov-  
ered,  
No lens to see them through like her.

So witchingly her finger-tips  
To Wisdom, as away she trips,  
She kisses, waves such sweet farewells  
To Duty, as she laughs "To-morrow!"  
That both from that mad contrast bor-  
row

A perfectness found nowhere else.

The beach-bird on its pearly verge  
Follows and flies the whispering surge,  
While, in his tent, the rock-stayed shell  
Awaits the flood's star-timed vibrations,  
And both, the flutter and the patience,  
The sauntering poet loves them well.

Fulfil so much of God's decree  
As works its problem out in thee,  
Nor dream that in thy breast alone  
The conscience of the changeful seasons,  
The Will that in the planets reasons  
With space-wide logic, has its throne.

Thy virtue makes not vice of mine,  
Unlike, but none the less divine;  
Thy toil adorns, not chides, my play;  
Nature of sameness is so chary,  
With such wild whim the freakish fairy  
Picks presents for the christening-day.

#### SELF-STUDY.

A PRESENCE both by night and day,  
That made my life seem just begun,  
Yet scarce a presence, rather say  
The warning aureole of one.

And yet I felt it everywhere;  
Walked I the woodland's aisles along,  
It seemed to brush me with its hair;  
Bathed I, I heard a mermaid's song.

How sweet it was! A buttercup  
Could hold for me a day's delight,  
A bird could lift my fancy up  
To ether free from cloud or blight.

Who was the nymph? Nay, I will see,  
Methought, and I will know her near;  
If such, divined, her charm can be,  
Seen and possessed, how triply dear!

So every magic art I tried,  
And spells as numberless as sand,  
Until, one evening, by my side  
I saw her glowing fulness stand.

I turned to clasp her, but "Farewell,"  
Parting she sighed, "we meet no more;  
Not by my hand the curtain fell  
That leaves you conscious, wise, and  
poor.

"Since you have found me out, I go;  
Another lover I must find,  
Content his happiness to know,  
Nor strive its secret to unwind."

## PICTURES FROM APPLEDORE.

## I.

A HEAP of bare and splintery crags  
Tumbled about by lightning and frost,  
With rifts and chasms and storm-  
bleached jags,

That wait and growl for a ship to be  
lost;

No island, but rather the skeleton  
Of a wrecked and vengeance-smitten  
one,

Where, æons ago, with half-shut eye,  
The sluggish saurian crawled to die,  
Gasping under titanic ferns;  
Ribs of rock that seaward jut,  
Granite shoulders and boulders and  
snags,

Round which, though the winds in  
heaven be shut,

The nightmared ocean murmurs and  
yearns,

Welters, and swashes, and tosses, and  
turns,

And the dreary black sea-weed lolls and  
wags;

Only rock from shore to shore,  
Only a moan through the bleak clefts  
blown,

With sobs in the rifts where the coarse  
kelp shifts,

Falling and lifting, tossing and drifting,  
And under all a deep, dull roar,

Dying and swelling, forevermore, —  
Rock and moan and roar alone,

And the dread of some nameless thing  
unknown,

These make Appledore.

These make Appledore by night:

Then there are monsters left and right;  
Every rock is a different monster;

All you have read of, fancied, dreamed,  
When you waked at night because you  
screamed,

There they lie for half a mile,

Jumbled together in a pile,

And (though you know they never once  
stir),

If you look long, they seem to be  
moving

Just as plainly as plain can be,  
Crushing and crowding, wading and  
shoving

Out into the awful sea,  
Where you can hear them snort and

spout

With pauses between, as if they were  
listening,

Then tumult anon when the surf breaks  
glistening

In the blackness where they wallow  
about.

## II.

All this you would scarcely comprehend,  
Should you see the isle on a sunny day;

Then it is simple enough in its way, —  
Two rocky bulges, one at each end,

With a smaller bulge and a hollow be-  
tween;

Patches of whortleberry and bay;

Accidents of open green,

Sprinkled with loose slabs square and  
gray,

Like graveyards for ages deserted; a few  
Unsocial thistles; an elder or two,

Foamed over with blossoms white as  
spray;

And on the whole island never a tree  
Save a score of sumachs, high as your

knee,  
That crouch in hollows where they may,

(The cellars where once stood a village,  
men say,)

Huddling for warmth, and never grew

Tall enough for a peep at the sea;

A general dazzle of open blue;

A breeze always blowing and playing  
rat-tat

With the bow of the ribbon round your  
hat;

A score of sheep that do nothing but  
stare

Up or down at you everywhere;

Three or four cattle that chew the cud

Lying about in a listless despair;

A medrick that makes you look over-  
head

With short, sharp scream, as he sights  
his prey,

And, dropping straight and swift as  
lead,

Splits the water with sudden thud;—

This is Appledore by day.

A common island, you will say;

But stay a moment: only climb

Up to the highest rock of the isle,

Stand there alone for a little while,

And with gentle approaches it grows  
sublime,

Dilating slowly as you win

A sense from the silence to take it in.

So wide the liveness, so lucid the air,  
 The granite beneath you so savagely  
 bare,  
 You well might think you were looking  
 down  
 From some sky-silenced mountain's  
 crown,  
 Whose waist-belt of pines is wont to tear  
 Locks of wool from the topmost cloud.  
 Only be sure you go alone,  
 For Grandeur is inaccessibly proud,  
 And never yet has backward thrown  
 Her veil to feed the stare of a crowd;  
 To more than one was never shown  
 That awful front, nor is it fit  
 That she, Cothurnus-shod, stand bowed  
 Until the self-approving pit  
 Enjoy the gust of its own wit  
 In babbling plaudits cheaply loud;  
 She hides her mountains and her sea  
 From the harriers of scenery,  
 Who hunt down sunsets, and huddle  
 and bay,  
 Mouthing and mumbling the dying day.

Trust me, 't is something to be cast  
 Face to face with one's Self at last,  
 To be taken out of the fuss and strife,  
 The endless clatter of plate and knife,  
 The bore of books and the bores of the  
 street,  
 From the singular mess we agree to call  
 Life,  
 Where that is best which the most fools  
 vote is,  
 And planted firm on one's own two  
 feet  
 So nigh to the great warm heart of God,  
 You almost seem to feel it beat  
 Down from the sunshine and up from  
 the sod;  
 To be compelled, as it were, to notice  
 All the beautiful changes and chances  
 Through which the landscape flits and  
 glances,  
 And to see how the face of common day  
 Is written all over with tender histories,  
 When you study it that intenser way  
 In which a lover looks at his mistress.

Till now you dreamed not what could  
 be done  
 With a bit of rock and a ray of sun;  
 But look, how fade the lights and shades  
 Of keen bare edge and crevice deep!  
 How doubtfully it fades and fades,  
 And glows again, yon craggy steep,

O'er which, through color's dreamiest  
 grades,  
 The musing sunbeams pause and creep!  
 Now pink it blooms, now glimmers gray,  
 Now shadows to a filmy blue,  
 Tries one, tries all, and will not stay,  
 But flits from opal hue to hue,  
 And runs through every tenderest range  
 Of change that seems not to be change,  
 So rare the sweep, so nice the art,  
 That lays no stress on any part,  
 But shifts and lingers and persuades;  
 So soft that sun-brush in the west,  
 That asks no costlier pigments' aids,  
 But mingling knobs, flaws, angles, dints,  
 Indifferent of worst or best,  
 Enchants the cliffs with wraiths and  
 hints  
 And gracious preludings of tints,  
 Where all seems fixed, yet all evades,  
 And indefinitely pervades  
 Perpetual movement with perpetual rest!

## III.

Away northeast is Boone Island light;  
 You might mistake it for a ship,  
 Only it stands too plumb upright,  
 And like the others does not slip  
 Behind the sea's unsteady brink;  
 Though, if a cloud-shade chance to dip  
 Upon it a moment, 't will suddenly sink,  
 Levelled and lost in the darkened main,  
 Till the sun builds it suddenly up again,  
 As if with a rub of Aladdin's lamp.  
 On the mainland you see a misty camp  
 Of mountains pitched tumultuously:  
 That one looming so long and large  
 Is Saddleback, and that point you see  
 Over yon low and rounded marge,  
 Like the boss of a sleeping giant's targe  
 Laid over his breast, is Ossipee;  
 That shadow there may be Kearsarge;  
 That must be Great Haystack; I love  
 these names,  
 Wherewith the lonely farmer tames  
 Nature to mute companionship  
 With his own mind's domestic mood,  
 And strives the surly world to clip  
 In the arms of familiar habitude.  
 'T is well he could not contrive to make  
 A Saxon of Agamenticus:  
 He glowers there to the north of us,  
 Wrapt in his blanket of blue haze,  
 Unconvertibly savage, and scorns to  
 take  
 The white man's baptism or his ways,



Him first on shore the coaster divines  
Through the early gray, and sees him  
shake

The morning mist from his scalp-lock  
of pines;

Him first the skipper makes out in the  
west,

Ere the earliest sunstreak shoots trem-  
ulous,

Plashing with orange the palpitant lines  
Of mutable billow, crest after crest,  
And murmurs *Agamenticus!*

As if it were the name of a saint.  
But is that a mountain playing cloud,  
Or a cloud playing mountain, just there,  
so faint?

Look along over the low right shoulder  
Of *Agamenticus* into that crowd  
Of brassy thunderheads behind it;  
Now you have caught it, but, ere you  
are older

By half an hour, you will lose it and  
find it

A score of times; while you look 't is  
gone,

And, just as you've given it up, anon  
It is there again, till your weary eyes  
Fancy they see it waver and rise,  
With its brother clouds; it is *Agio-*  
*chook,*

There if you seek not, and gone if you  
look,

Ninety miles off as the eagle flies.

But mountains make not all the shore  
The mainland shows to Appledore;  
Eight miles the heaving water spreads  
To a long low coast with beaches and  
heads

That run through unimagined mazes,  
As the lights and shades and magical  
hazes

Put them away or bring them near,  
Shimmering, sketched out for thirty  
miles

Between two capes that waver like  
threads,

And sink in the ocean, and reappear,  
Crumbled and melted to little isles,  
With filmy trees, that seem the mere  
Half-fancies of drowsy atmosphere;  
And see the beach there, where it is  
Flat as a threshing-floor, beaten and  
packed

With the flashing flails of weariless  
seas,

How it lifts and looms to a precipice,

O'er whose square front, a dream, no  
more,

The steepened sand-stripes seem to pour,  
A murmureless vision of cataract;  
You almost fancy you hear a roar,  
Fitful and faint from the distance wan-  
dering;

But 't is only the blind old ocean maun-  
dering,

Raking the shingle to and fro,  
Aimlessly clutching and letting go  
The kelp-haired sedges of Appledore,  
Slipping down with a sleepy forgetting,  
And anon his ponderous shoulder setting,  
With a deep, hoarse pant against Apple-  
dore.

IV.

Eastward as far as the eye can see,  
Still eastward, eastward, endlessly,  
The sparkle and tremor of purple sea  
That rises before you, a flickering hill,  
On and on to the shut of the sky,  
And beyond, you fancy it sloping until  
The same multitudinous throb and thrill  
That vibrate under your dizzy eye  
In ripples of orange and pink are sent  
Where the popped sails doze on the  
yard,

And the clumsy junk and proa lie  
Sunk deep with precious woods and  
nard,

Mid the palmy isles of the Orient.  
Those leaning towers of clouded white  
On the farthest brink of doubtful ocean,  
That shorten and shorten out of sight,  
Yet seem on the selfsame spot to stay,  
Receding with a motionless motion,  
Fading to dubious films of gray,  
Lost, dimly found, then vanished  
wholly,

Will rise again, the great world under,  
First films, then towers, then high-  
heaped clouds,

Whose nearing outlines sharpen slowly  
Into tall ships with cobweb shrouds,  
That fill long Mongol eyes with wonder,  
Crushing the violet wave to spray  
Past some low headland of Cathay;—  
What was that sigh which seemed so  
near,

Chilling your fancy to the core?  
'T is only the sad old sea you hear,  
That seems to seek forevermore  
Something it cannot find, and so,  
Sighing, seeks on, and tells its woe  
To the pitiless breakers of Appledore.

## V.

How looks Appledore in a storm ?

I have seen it when its crags seemed  
frantic,

Butting against the mad Atlantic,  
When surge on surge would heap enorme,  
Cliffs of emerald topped with snow,  
That lifted and lifted, and then let go

A great white avalanche of thunder,  
A grinding, blinding, deafening ire  
Monadnock might have trembled under ;  
And the island, whose rock-roots pierce  
below

To where they are warmed with the  
central fire,

You could feel its granite fibres racked,  
As it seemed to plunge with a shudder  
and thrill

Right at the breast of the swooping  
hill,

And to rise again snorting a cataract  
Of rage-froth from every cranny and  
ledge,

While the sea drew its breath in hoarse  
and deep,

And the next vast breaker curled its  
edge,  
Gathering itself for a mightier leap.

North, east, and south there are reefs  
and breakers

You would never dream of in smooth  
weather,

That toss and gore the sea for acres,  
Bellowing and gnashing and snarling  
together ;

Look northward, where Duck Island lies,  
And over its crown you will see arise,  
Against a background of slaty skies,  
A row of pillars still and white,

That glimmer, and then are gone from  
sight,

As if the moon should suddenly kiss,  
While you crossed the gusty desert by  
night,

The long colonnades of Persepolis ;  
Look southward for White Island light,  
The lantern stands ninety feet o'er the  
tide ;

There is first a half-mile of tumult and  
fight,

Of dash and roar and tumble and fright,  
And surging bewilderment wild and  
wide,

Where the breakers struggle left and  
right,

Then a mile or more of rushing sea,  
And then the lighthouse slim and lone ;  
And whenever the weight of ocean is  
thrown

Full and fair on White Island head,  
A great mist-jotun you will see  
Lifting himself up silently  
High and huge o'er the lighthouse top,  
With hands of wavering spray outspread,  
Groping after the little tower,  
That seems to shrink and shorten and  
cower,

Till the monster's arms of a sudden drop,  
And silently and fruitlessly  
He sinks back into the sea.

You, meanwhile, where drenched you  
stand,

Awaken once more to the rush and  
roar,

And on the rock-point tighten your  
hand,

As you turn and see a valley deep,  
That was not there a moment before,  
Suck rattling down between you and a  
heap

Of toppling billow, whose instant fall  
Must sink the whole island once for  
all,

Or watch the silenter, stealthier seas  
Feeling their way to you more and  
more ;

If they once should clutch you high as  
the knees,

They would whirl you down like a sprig  
of kelp,

Beyond all reach of hope or help ; —  
And such in a storm is Appledore.

## VI.

'T is the sight of a lifetime to behold  
The great shorn sun as you see it now,  
Across eight miles of undulant gold  
That widens landward, weltered and  
rolled,

With freaks of shadow and crimson  
stains ;

To see the solid mountain brow  
As it notches the disk, and gains and  
gains

Until there comes, you scarce know when,  
A tremble of fire o'er the parted lips  
Of cloud and mountain, which vanishes ;  
then

From the body of day the sun-soul  
slips

And the face of earth darkens ; but now  
the strips

Of western vapor, straight and thin,  
From which the horizon's swervings win  
A grace of contrast, take fire and burn  
Like splinters of touchwood, whose  
edges a mould

Of ashes o'erfeathers ; northward turn  
For an instant, and let your eye grow  
cold

On Agameticus, and when once more  
You look, 't is as if the land-breeze,  
growing,

From the smouldering brands the film  
were blowing,

And brightening them down to the very  
core ;

Yet they momentarily cool and dampen  
and deaden,

The crimson turns golden, the gold turns  
leadan,

Hardening into one black bar  
O'er which, from the hollow heaven afar,  
Shoots a splinter of light like diamond,  
Half seen, half fancied ; by and by  
Beyond whatever is most beyond  
In the uttermost waste of desert sky,  
Grows a star ;

And over it, visible spirit of dew, —  
Ah, stir not, speak not, hold your  
breath,

Or surely the miracle vanisheth, —  
The new moon, tranced in unspeakable  
blue !

No frail illusion ; this were true,  
Rather, to call it the canoe  
Hollowed out of a single pearl,  
That floats us from the Present's whirl  
Back to those beings which were ours,  
When wishes were winged things like  
powers !

Call it not light, that mystery tender,  
Which broods upon the brooding ocean,  
That flush of ecstasied surrender

To indefinable emotion,  
That glory, mellowed than a mist  
Of pearl dissolved with amethyst,  
Which rims Square Rock, like what  
they paint

Of mitigated heavenly splendor  
Round the stern forehead of a Saint !

No more a vision, reddened, largened,  
The moon dips toward her mountain nest,  
And, fringing it with palest argent,  
Slow sheathes herself behind the mar-  
gent

Of that long cloud-bar in the West,  
Whose nether edge, erelong, you see  
The silvery chrim in turn anoint,  
And then the tiniest rosy point  
Touched doubtfully and timidly  
Into the dark blue's chilly strip,  
As some mute, wondering thing below,  
Awakened by the thrilling glow,  
Might, looking up, see Dian dip  
One lucent foot's delaying tip  
In Latmian fountains long ago.

Knew you what silence was before ?  
Here is no startle of dreaming bird  
That sings in his sleep, or strives to  
sing ;

Here is no sough of branches stirred,  
Nor noise of any living thing,  
Such as one hears by night on shore ;  
Only, now and then, a sigh,  
With fickle intervals between,  
Sometimes far, and sometimes nigh,  
Such as Andromeda might have heard,  
And fancied the huge sea-beast unseen  
Turning in sleep ; it is the sea  
That welters and wavers uneasily  
Round the lonely reefs of Appledore.

## THE WIND-HARP.

I TREASURE in secret some long, fine  
hair  
Of tenderest brown, but so inwardly  
golden

I half used to fancy the sunshine there,  
So shy, so shifting, so waywardly rare,  
Was only caught for the moment and  
holden

While I could say *Dearest!* and kiss it,  
and then  
In pity let go to the summer again.

I twisted this magic in gossamer strings  
Over a wind-harp's Delphian hollow ;  
Then called to the idle breeze that  
swings

All day in the pine-tops, and clings, and  
sings

Mid the musical leaves, and said, "O,  
follow  
The will of those tears that deepen my  
words,  
And fly to my window to waken these  
chords."



So they trembled to life, and, doubt-  
fully

Feeling their way to my sense, sang,  
"Say whether

They sit all day by the greenwood tree,  
The lover and loved, as it wont to  
be,

When we —" But grief conquered,  
and all together

They swelled such weird murmur as  
haunts a shore

Of some planet dispeopled, — "Never-  
more!"

Then from deep in the past, as seemed  
to me,

The strings gathered sorrow and sang  
forsaken,

"One lover still waits 'neath the green-  
wood tree,

But 't is dark," and they shuddered,  
"where lieth she

Dark and cold! Forever must one  
be taken?"

But I groaned, "O harp of all ruth  
bereft,

This Scripture is sadder, — 'the other  
left'!"

There murmured, as if one strove to  
speak,

And tears came instead; then the sad  
tones wandered

And faltered among the uncertain chords  
In a troubled doubt between sorrow and  
words;

At last with themselves they ques-  
tioned and pondered,

"Hereafter? — who knoweth?" and so  
they sighed

Down the long steps that lead to silence  
and died.

#### AUF WIEDERSEHEN!

##### SUMMER.

THE little gate was reached at last,  
Half hid in lilacs down the lane;  
She pushed it wide, and, as she past,  
A wistful look she backward cast,  
And said, — "*Auf wiedersehen!*"

With hand on latch, a vision white  
Lingered reluctant, and again  
Half doubting if she did aright,

Soft as the dews that fell that night,  
She said, — "*Auf wiedersehen!*"

The lamp's clear gleam flits up the stair;  
I linger in delicious pain;  
Ah, in that chamber, whose rich air  
To breathe in thought I scarcely dare,  
Thinks she, — "*Auf wiedersehen!*"

'T is thirteen years; once more I press  
The turf that silences the lane;  
I hear the rustle of her dress,  
I smell the lilacs, and — ah, yes,  
I hear "*Auf wiedersehen!*"

Sweet piece of bashful maiden art!  
The English words had seemed too  
fain,

But these — they drew us heart to heart,  
Yet held us tenderly apart;  
She said, "*Auf wiedersehen!*"

#### PALINODE.

##### AUTUMN.

STILL thirteen years: 't is autumn now  
On field and hill, in heart and brain;  
The naked trees at evening sough;  
The leaf to the forsaken bough  
Sighs not, — "*Auf wiedersehen!*"

Two watched yon oriole's pendent dome,  
That now is void, and dank with rain,  
And one, — O, hope more frail than  
foam!

The bird to his deserted home  
Sings not, — "*Auf wiedersehen!*"

The loath gate swings with rusty creak;  
Once, parting there, we played at  
pain;

There came a parting, when the weak  
And fading lips essayed to speak  
Vainly, — "*Auf wiedersehen!*"

Somewhere is comfort, somewhere faith,  
Though thou in outer dark remain;  
One sweet sad voice ennobles death,  
And still, for eighteen centuries saith  
Softly, "*Auf wiedersehen!*"

If earth another grave must bear,  
Yet heaven hath won a sweeter strain,  
And something whispers my despair,  
That, from an orient chamber there,  
Floats down, "*Auf wiedersehen!*"

## AFTER THE BURIAL.

YES, faith is a goodly anchor ;  
When skies are sweet as a psalm,  
At the bows it lolls so stalwart,  
In its bluff, broad-shouldered calm.

And when over breakers to leeward  
The tattered surges are hurled,  
It may keep our head to the tempest,  
With its grip on the base of the world.

But, after the shipwreck, tell me  
What help in its iron thews,  
Still true to the broken hawser,  
Deep down among sea-weed and ooze ?

In the breaking gulfs of sorrow,  
When the helpless feet stretch out  
And find in the deeps of darkness  
No footing so solid as doubt,

Then better one spar of Memory,  
One broken plank of the Past,  
That our human heart may cling to,  
Though hopeless of shore at last !

To the spirit its splendid conjectures,  
To the flesh its sweet despair,  
Its tears o'er the thin-worn locket  
With its anguish of deathless hair !

Immortal ? I feel it and know it,  
Who doubts it of such as she ?  
But that is the pang's very secret, —  
Immortal away from me.

There's a narrow ridge in the grave-  
yard  
Would scarce stay a child in his race,  
But to me and my thought it is wider  
Than the star-sown vague of Space.

Your logic, my friend, is perfect,  
Your moral most drearly true ;  
But, since the earth clashed on *her*  
coffin,  
I keep hearing that, and not you.

Console if you will, I can bear it ;  
'T is a well-meant alms of breath ;  
But not all the preaching since Adam  
Has made Death other than Death.

It is pagan ; but wait till you feel it, —  
That jar of our earth, that dull shock  
When the ploughshare of deeper pas-  
sion  
Tears down to our primitive rock.

Communion in spirit ! Forgive me,  
But I, who am earthy and weak,  
Would give all my incomes from dream-  
land  
For a touch of her hand on my cheek.

That little shoe in the corner,  
So worn and wrinkled and brown,  
With its emptiness confutes you,  
And argues your wisdom down.

## THE DEAD HOUSE.

HERE once my step was quickened,  
Here beckoned the opening door,  
And welcome thrilled from the thresh-  
old  
To the foot it had known before.

A glow came forth to meet me  
From the flame that laughed in the  
grate,  
And shadows adance on the ceiling,  
Danced blither with mine for a mate.

"I claim you, old friend," yawned the  
arm-chair,  
"This corner, you know, is your  
seat" ;  
"Rest your slippers on me," beamed the  
fender,  
"I brighten at touch of your feet."

"We know the practised finger,"  
Said the books, "that seems like  
brain" ;  
And the shy page rustled the secret  
It had kept till I came again.

Sang the pillow, "My down once quiv-  
ered  
On nightingales' throats that flew  
Through moonlit gardens of Hafiz  
To gather quaint dreams for you."

Ah me, where the Past sowed heart's  
ease,  
The Present plucks rue for us men !  
I come back : that scar unhealing  
Was not in the churchyard then.

But, I think, the house is unaltered,  
I will go and beg to look  
At the rooms that were once familiar  
To my life as its bed to a brook.

Unaltered! Alas for the sameness  
That makes the change but more!  
'T is a dead man I see in the mirrors,  
'T is his tread that chills the floor!

To learn such a simple lesson,  
Need I go to Paris and Rome,  
That the many make the household,  
But only one the home?

'T was just a womanly presence,  
An influence unexpressed,  
But a rose she had worn, on my grave-  
sod  
Were more than long life with the rest!

'T was a smile, 't was a garment's rustle,  
'T was nothing that I can phrase,  
But the whole dumb dwelling grew  
conscience,  
And put on her looks and ways.

Were it mine I would close the shutters,  
Like lids when the life is fled,  
And the funeral fire should wind it,  
This corpse of a home that is dead.

For it died that autumn morning  
When she, its soul, was borne  
To lie all dark on the hillside  
That looks over woodland and corn.

#### A MOOD.

I go to the ridge in the forest  
I haunted in days gone by,  
But thou, O Memory, pourest  
No magical drop in mine eye,  
Nor the gleam of the secret restorest  
That hath faded from earth and sky:  
A Presence autumnal and sober  
Invests every rock and tree,  
And the aureole of October  
Lights the maples, but darkens me.

Pine in the distance,  
Patient through sun or rain,  
Meeting with graceful persistence,  
With yielding but rooted resistance,  
The northwind's wrench and strain,  
No memory of past existence  
Brings thee pain;  
Right for the zenith heading,  
Friendly with heat or cold,  
Thine arms to the influence spreading  
Of the heavens, just from of old,

Thou only aspirest the more,  
Unregretful the old leaves shedding  
That fringed thee with music before,  
And deeper thy roots embedding  
In the grace and the beauty of yore;  
Thou sigh'st not, "Alas, I am older,  
The green of last summer is sear!"  
But loftier, hopefuller, bolder,  
Winnest broader horizons each year.

To me 't is not cheer thou art singing:  
There's a sound of the sea,  
O mournful tree,  
In thy boughs forever clinging,  
And the far-off roar  
Of waves on the shore  
A shattered vessel flinging.

As thou musest still of the ocean  
On which thou must float at last,  
And seem'st to foreknow  
The shipwreck's woe  
And the sailor wrenched from the broken  
mast,  
Do I, in this vague emotion,  
This sadness that will not pass,  
Though the air throb with wings,  
And the field laughs and sings,  
Do I forebode, alas!  
The ship-building longer and wearier,  
The voyage's struggle and strife,  
And then the darker and drearier  
Wreck of a broken life?

#### THE VOYAGE TO VINLAND.

##### I.

##### BIÖRN'S BECKONERS.

Now Biörn, the son of Heriulf, had ill  
days  
Because the heart within him seethed  
with blood  
That would not be allayed with any toil,  
Whether of war or hunting or the oar,  
But was anhungered for some joy un-  
tried:  
For the brain grew not weary with the  
limbs,  
But, while they slept, still hammered  
like a Troll,  
Building all night a bridge of solid  
dream  
Between him and some purpose of his  
soul,



Or will to find a purpose. With the  
dawn  
The sleep-laid timbers, crumbled to soft  
mist,  
Denied all foothold. But the dream  
remained,  
And every night with yellow-bearded  
kings  
His sleep was haunted, — mighty men  
of old,  
Once young as he, now ancient like the  
gods,  
And safe as stars in all men's memo-  
ries.  
Strange sagas read he in their sea-blue  
eyes  
Cold as the sea, grandly compassionless ;  
Like life, they made him eager and then  
mocked.  
Nay, broad awake, they would not let  
him be ;  
They shaped themselves gigantic in the  
mist,  
They rose far-beckoning in the lamps of  
heaven,  
They whispered invitation in the winds,  
And breath came from them, mightier  
than the wind,  
To strain the lagging sails of his resolve,  
Till that grew passion which before was  
wish,  
And youth seemed all too costly to be  
staked  
On the soiled cards wherewith men  
played their game,  
Letting Time pocket up the larger life,  
Lost with base gain of raiment, food,  
and roof.  
"What helpeth lightness of the feet?"  
they said,  
"Oblivion runs with swifter foot than  
they ;  
Or strength of sinew? New men come  
as strong,  
And those sleep nameless ; or renown in  
war?  
Swords grave no name on the long-  
memoried rock  
But moss shall hide it ; they alone who  
wring  
Some secret purpose from the unwilling  
gods  
Survive in song for yet a little while  
To vex, like us, the dreams of later  
men,  
Ourselves a dream, and dreamlike all we  
did."

## II.

## THORWALD'S LAY.

So Biörn went comfortless but for his  
thought,  
And by his thought the more discom-  
forted,  
Till Eric Thurlson kept his Yule-tide  
feast :  
And thither came he, called among the  
rest,  
Silent, lone-minded, a church-door to  
mirth :  
But, ere deep draughts forbade such  
serious song  
As the grave Skald might chant nor  
after blush,  
Then Eric looked at Thorwald where he  
sat  
Mute as a cloud amid the stormy hall,  
And said : "O Skald, sing now an olden  
song,  
Such as our fathers heard who led great  
lives ;  
And, as the bravest on a shield is borne  
Along the waving host that shouts him  
king,  
So rode their thrones upon the throng-  
ing seas !"  
Then the old man arose ; white-haired  
he stood,  
White-bearded, and with eyes that  
looked afar  
From their still region of perpetual snow,  
Beyond the little smokes and stirs of  
men :  
His head was bowed with gathered  
flakes of years,  
As winter bends the sea-foreboding pine,  
But something triumphed in his brow  
and eye,  
Which whoso saw it could not see and  
crouch :  
Loud rang the emptied beakers as he  
mused,  
Brooding his eyried thoughts ; then, as  
an eagle  
Circles smooth-winged above the wind-  
vexed woods,  
So wheeled his soul into the air of song  
High o'er the stormy hall ; and thus he  
sang :  
"The fletcher for his arrow-shaft picks  
out  
Wood closest-grained, long-seasoned,  
straight as light ;  
And from a quiver full of such as these

The wary Bowman, matched against his  
peers,  
Long doubting, singles yet once more  
the best.  
Who is it needs such flawless shafts as  
Fate?  
What archer of his arrows is so choice,  
Or hits the white so surely? They are  
men,  
The chosen of her quiver; nor for her  
Will every reed suffice, or cross-grained  
stick  
At random from life's vulgar fagot  
plucked:  
Such answer household ends; but she  
will have  
Souls straight and clear, of toughest  
fibre, sound  
Down to the heart of heart; from these  
she strips  
All needless stuff, all sapwood; seasons  
them;  
From circumstance untoward feathers  
plucks  
Crumpled and cheap; and barbs with  
iron will:  
The hour that passes is her quiver-boy:  
When she draws bow, 't is not across  
the wind,  
Nor 'gainst the sun her haste-snatched  
arrow sings,  
For sun and wind have plighted faith  
to her:  
Ere men have heard the sinew twang,  
behold  
In the butt's heart her trembling mes-  
senger!

"The song is old and simple that I  
sing;  
But old and simple are despised as  
cheap,  
Though hardest to achieve of human  
things:  
Good were the days of yore, when men  
were tried  
By ring of shields, as now by ring of  
words;  
But while the gods are left, and hearts  
of men,  
And wide-doored ocean, still the days  
are good.  
Still o'er the earth hastes Opportunity,  
Seeking the hardy soul that seeks for  
her.  
Be not abroad, nor deaf with household  
cares

That chatter loudest as they mean the  
least;  
Swift-willed is thrice-willed; late means  
nevermore;  
Impatient is her foot, nor turns again."  
He ceased; upon his bosom sank his  
beard  
Sadly, as one who oft had seen her pass  
Nor stayed her; and forthwith the  
frothy tide  
Of interrupted wassail roared along;  
But Biörn, the son of Heriulf, sat apart  
Musing, and, with his eyes upon the fire,  
Saw shapes of arrows, lost as soon as seen.  
"A ship," he muttered, "is a winged  
bridge  
That leadeth every way to man's desire,  
And ocean the wide gate to manful  
luck";  
And then with that resolve his heart  
was bent,  
Which, like a humming shaft, through  
many a stripe  
Of day and night, across the unpath-  
wayed seas  
Shot the brave prow that cut on Vin-  
land sands  
The first rune in the Saga of the West.

## III.

## GUDRIDA'S PROPHECY.

Four weeks they sailed, a speck in sky-  
shut seas,  
Life, where was never life that knew  
itself,  
But tumbled lubber-like in blowing  
whales;  
Thought, where the like had never been  
before  
Since Thought primeval brooded the  
abyss;  
Alone as men were never in the world.  
They saw the icy foundlings of the sea,  
White cliffs of silence, beautiful by day,  
Or looming, sudden-perilous, at night  
In monstrous hush; or sometimes in the  
dark  
The waves broke ominous with paly  
gleams  
Crushed by the prow in sparkles of cold  
fire.  
Then came green stripes of sea that  
promised land  
But brought it not, and on the thirtieth  
day

Low in the West were wooded shores  
like cloud.

They shouted as men shout with sudden hope;

But Biörn was silent, such strange loss  
there is

Between the dream's fulfilment and the  
dream,

Such sad abatement in the goal attained.

Then Gudrida, that was a prophetess,  
Rapt with strange influence from Atlantis, sang:

Her words: the vision was the dreaming shore's.

Looms there the New Land:

Locked in the shadow  
Long the gods shut it,  
Niggards of newness  
They, the o'er-old.

Little it looks there,  
Slim as a cloud-streak;  
It shall fold peoples  
Even as a shepherd  
Foldeth his flock.

Silent it sleeps now;  
Great ships shall seek it,  
Swarming as salmon;  
Noise of its numbers  
Two seas shall hear.

Man from the Northland,  
Man from the Southland,  
Haste empty-handed;  
No more than manhood  
Bring they, and hands.

Dark hair and fair hair,  
Red blood and blue blood,  
There shall be mingled;  
Force of the ferment  
Makes the New Man.

Pick of all kindreds,  
King's blood shall theirs be,  
Shoots of the eldest  
Stock upon Midgard,  
Sons of the poor.

Them waits the New Land;  
They shall subdue it,  
Leaving their sons' sons  
Space for the body,  
Space for the soul.

Leaving their sons' sons  
All things save song-craft,  
Plant long in growing,  
Thrusting its tap-root  
Deep in the Gone.

Here men shall grow up  
Strong from self-helping;  
Eyes for the present  
Bring they as eagles',  
Blind to the Past.

They shall make over  
Creed, law, and custom;  
Driving-men, doughty  
Builders of empire,  
Builders of men.

Here is no singer;  
What should they sing of?  
They, the unresting?  
Labor is ugly,  
Loathsome is change.

These the old gods hate,  
Dwellers in dream-land,  
Drinking delusion  
Out of the empty  
Skull of the Past.

These hate the old gods,  
Warring against them;  
Fatal to Odin,  
Here the wolf Fenrir  
Lieth in wait.

Here the gods' Twilight  
Gathers, earth-gulping;  
Blackness of battle,  
Fierce till the Old World  
Flare up in fire.

Doubt not, my Northmen;  
Fate loves the fearless;  
Fools, when their roof-tree  
Falls, think it doomsday;  
Firm stands the sky.

Over the ruin  
See I the promise;  
Crisp waves the cornfield,  
Peace-walled, the homestead  
Waits open-doored.

There lies the New Land;  
Yours to behold it,  
Not to possess it;  
Slowly Fate's perfect  
Fulness shall come.



Then from your strong loins  
Seed shall be scattered,  
Men to the marrow,  
Wilderness tamers,  
Walkers of waves.

Jealous, the old gods  
Shut it in shadow,  
Wisely they ward it,  
Egg of the serpent,  
Bane to them all.

Stronger and sweeter  
New gods shall seek it  
Fill it with man-folk  
Wise for the future,  
Wise from the past.

Here all is all men's,  
Save only Wisdom;  
King he that wins her;  
Him hail they helmsman,  
Highest of heart.

Might makes no master  
Here any longer;  
Sword is not swayer;  
Here e'en the gods are  
Selfish no more.

Walking the New Earth,  
Lo, a divine One  
Greets all men godlike,  
Calls them his kindred,  
He, the Divine.

Is it Thor's hammer  
Rays in his right hand?  
Weaponless walks he;  
It is the White Christ,  
Stronger than Thor.

Here shall a realm rise  
Mighty in manhood;  
Justice and Mercy  
Here set a stronghold  
Safe without spear.

Weak was the Old World,  
Wearily war-fenced;  
Out of its ashes,  
Strong as the morning,  
Springeth the New.

Beauty of promise,  
Promise of beauty,

Safe in the silence  
Sleep thou, till cometh  
Light to thy lids!

Thee shall awaken  
Flame from the furnace,  
Bath of all brave ones,  
Cleanser of conscience,  
Welder of will.

Lowly shall love thee,  
Thee, open-handed!  
Stalwart shall shield thee,  
Thee, worth their best blood,  
Waif of the West!

Then shall come singers,  
Singing no swan-song,  
Birth-carols, rather,  
Meet for the man child  
Mighty of bone.

#### MAHMOOD THE IMAGE-BREAKER.

OLD events have modern meanings;  
only that survives  
Of past history which finds kindred in  
all hearts and lives.

Mahmood once, the idol-breaker, spread-  
er of the Faith,  
Was at Sumnat tempted sorely, as the  
legend saith.

In the great pagoda's centre, monstrous  
and abhorred,  
Granite on a throne of granite, sat the  
temple's lord.

Mahmood paused a moment, silenced by  
the silent face  
That, with eyes of stone unwavering,  
awed the ancient place.

Then the Brahmins knelt before him,  
by his doubt made bold,  
Pledging for their idol's ransom countless  
gems and gold.

Gold was yellow dirt to Mahmood, but  
of precious use,  
Since from it the roots of power suck a  
potent juice.

"Were yon stone alone in question, this  
would please me well,"

Mahmood said; "but, with the block  
there, I my truth must sell.

"Wealth and rule slip down with For-  
tune, as her wheel turns round;  
He who keeps his faith, he only cannot  
be discrowned.

"Little were a change of station, loss  
of life or crown,  
But the wreck were past retrieving if the  
Man fell down."

So his iron mace he lifted, smote with  
might and main,  
And the idol, on the pavement tumbling,  
burst in twain.

Luck obeys the downright striker; from  
the hollow core,  
Fifty times the Brahmins' offer deluged  
all the floor.

INVITA MINERVA.

THE Bardling came where by a river  
grew  
The pennoned reeds, that, as the west-  
wind blew,  
Gleamed and sighed plaintively, as if  
they knew  
What music slept enchanted in each  
stem,  
Till Pan should choose some happy one  
of them,  
And with wise lips enliven it through and  
through.

The Bardling thought, "A pipe is all I  
need;  
Once I have sought me out a clear,  
smooth reed,  
And shaped it to my fancy, I proceed  
To breathe such strains as, yonder mid  
the rocks,  
The strange youth blows, that tends  
Admetus' flocks,  
And all the maidens shall to me pay  
heed."

The summer day he spent in questful  
round,  
And many a reed he marred, but never  
found

A conjuring-spell to free the imprisoned  
sound;

At last his vainly wearied limbs he laid  
Beneath a sacred laurel's flickering shade,  
And sleep about his brain her cobweb  
wound.

Then strode the mighty Mother through  
his dreams,  
Saying: "The reeds along a thousand  
streams  
Are mine, and who is he that plots and  
schemes  
To snare the melodies wherewith my  
breath  
Sounds through the double pipes of Life  
and Death,  
Atoning what to men mad discord  
seems?"

"He seeks not me, but I seek oft in  
vain  
For him who shall my voiceful reeds  
constrain,  
And make them utter their melodious  
pain;  
He flies the immortal gift, for well he  
knows  
His life of life must with its overflows  
Flood the unthankful pipe, nor come  
again.

"Thou fool, who dost my harmless  
subjects wrong,  
'Tis not the singer's wish that makes  
the song:  
The rhythmic beauty wanders dumb,  
how long,  
Nor stoops to any daintiest instrument,  
Till, found its mated lips, their sweet  
consent  
Makes mortal breath than Time and  
Fate more strong."

THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH.

I.

"Tis a woodland enchanted:  
By no sadder spirit  
Than blackbirds and thrushes,  
That whistle to cheer it  
All day in the bushes,  
This woodland is haunted:  
And in a small clearing,

Beyond sight or hearing  
 Of human annoyance,  
 The little fount gushes,  
 First smoothly, then dashes  
 And gurgles and flashes,  
 To the maples and ashes  
 Confiding its joyance ;  
 Unconscious confiding,  
 Then, silent and glossy,  
 Slips winding and hiding  
 Through alder-stems mossy,  
 Through gossamer roots  
 Fine as nerves,  
 That tremble, as shoots  
 Through their magnetized curves  
 The allurements delicious  
 Of the water's capricious  
 Thrills, gushes, and swerves.

## II.

'Tis a woodland enchanted !  
 I am writing no fiction ;  
 And this fount, its sole daughter,  
 To the woodland was granted  
 To pour holy water  
 And win benediction ;  
 In summer-noon flushes,  
 When all the wood hushes,  
 Blue dragon-flies knitting  
 To and fro in the sun,  
 With sidelong jerk flitting  
 Sink down on the rushes,  
 And, motionless sitting,  
 Hear it bubble and run,  
 Hear its low inward singing,  
 With level wings swinging  
 On green tasselled rushes,  
 To dream in the sun.

## III.

'Tis a woodland enchanted !  
 The great August noonlight,  
 Through myriad rifts slanted,  
 Leaf and bole thickly sprinkles  
 With flickering gold ;  
 There, in warm August gloaming,  
 With quick, silent brightenings,  
 From meadow-lands roaming,  
 The firefly twinkles  
 His fitful heat-lightnings ;  
 There the magical moonlight  
 With meek, saintly glory  
 Steeps summit and wold ;  
 There whippoorwills plain in the soli-  
 tudes hoary

With lone cries that wander  
 Now hither, now yonder,  
 Like souls doomed of old  
 To a mild purgatory ;  
 But through noonlight and moonlight  
 The little fount tinkles  
 Its silver saints'-bells,  
 That no sprite ill-boding  
 May make his abode in  
 Those innocent dells.

## IV.

'T is a woodland enchanted !  
 When the phebe scarce whistles  
 Once an hour to his fellow,  
 And, where red lilies flaunted,  
 Balloons from the thistles  
 Tell summer's disasters,  
 The butterflies yellow,  
 As caught in an eddy  
 Of air's silent ocean,  
 Sink, waver, and steady  
 O'er goats'-beard and asters,  
 Like souls of dead flowers,  
 With aimless emotion  
 Still lingering unready  
 To leave their old bowers ;  
 And the fount is no dumber,  
 But still gleams and flashes,  
 And gurgles and plashes,  
 To the measure of summer ;  
 The butterflies hear it,  
 And spell-bound are holden,  
 Still balancing near it  
 O'er the goats'-beard so golden.

## V.

'T is a woodland enchanted !  
 A vast silver willow,  
 I know not how planted,  
 (This wood is enchanted,  
 And full of surprises,)  
 Stands stemming a billow,  
 A motionless billow  
 Of ankle-deep mosses ;  
 Two great roots it crosses  
 To make a round basin,  
 And there the Fount rises ;  
 Ah, too pure a mirror  
 For one sick of error  
 To see his sad face in !  
 No dew-drop is stiller  
 In its lupin-leaf setting  
 Than this water moss-bounded ;  
 But a tiny sand-pillar



From the bottom keeps jetting,  
 And mermaid ne'er sounded  
 Through the wreaths of a shell,  
 Down amid crimson dulses  
 In some dell of the ocean,  
 A melody sweeter  
 Than the delicate pulses,  
 The soft, noiseless metre,  
 The pause and the swell  
 Of that musical motion ;  
 I recall it, not see it ;  
 Could vision be clearer ?  
 Half I 'm fain to draw nearer,  
 Half tempted to flee it ;  
 The sleeping Past wake not,  
 Beware !  
 One forward step take not,  
 Ah ! break not  
 That quietude rare !  
 By my step unafrighted  
 A thrush hops before it,  
 And o'er it  
 A birch hangs delighted,  
 Dipping, dipping, dipping its tremu-  
 lous hair ;  
 Pure as the fountain, once  
 I came to the place,  
 (How dare I draw nearer ?)  
 I bent o'er its mirror,  
 And saw a child's face  
 Mid locks of bright gold in it ;  
 Yes, pure as this fountain once, —  
 Since, how much error !  
 Too holy a mirror  
 For the man to behold in it  
 His harsh, bearded countenance !

## VI.

'T is a woodland enchanted !  
 Ah, fly unreturning !  
 Yet stay ; —  
 'T is a woodland enchanted,  
 Where wonderful chances  
 Have sway ;  
 Luck flees from the cold one  
 But leaps to the bold one  
 Half-way ;  
 Why should I be daunted ?  
 Still the smooth mirror glances,  
 Still the amber sand dances,  
 One look, — then away !  
 O magical glass !  
 Canst keep in thy bosom  
 Shades of leaf and of blossom  
 When summer days pass,  
 So that when thy wave hardens

It shapes as it pleases,  
 Unharm'd by the breezes,  
 Its fine hanging gardens ?  
 Hast those in thy keeping,  
 And canst not uncover,  
 Enchantedly sleeping,  
 The old shade of thy lover ?  
 It is there ! I have found it !  
 He wakes, the long sleeper !  
 The pool is grown deeper,  
 The sand dance is ending,  
 The white floor sinks, blending  
 With skies that below me  
 Are deepening and bending,  
 And a child's face alone  
 That seems not to know me,  
 With hair that fades golden  
 In the heaven-glow round it,  
 Looks up at my own :  
 Ah, glimpse through the portal  
 That leads to the throne,  
 That opes the child's olden  
 Regions Elysian !  
 Ah, too holy vision  
 For thy skirts to be holden  
 By soiled hand of mortal !  
 It wavers, it scatters,  
 'T is gone past recalling !  
 A tear's sudden falling  
 The magic cup shatters,  
 Breaks the spell of the waters,  
 And the sand cone once more,  
 With a ceaseless renewing,  
 Its dance is pursuing  
 On the silvery floor,  
 O'er and o'er,  
 With a noiseless and ceaseless renewing.

## VII.

'T is a woodland enchanted !  
 If you ask me, *Where is it ?*  
 I can but make answer,  
 " 'T is past my disclosing : "  
 Not to choice is it granted  
 By sure paths to visit  
 The still pool enclosing  
 Its blithe little dancer ;  
 But in some day, the rarest  
 Of many Septembers,  
 When the pulses of air rest,  
 And all things lie dreaming  
 In drowsy haze steaming  
 From the wood's glowing embers,  
 Then, sometimes, unheeding,  
 And asking not whither,  
 By a sweet inward leading

My feet are drawn thither,  
 And, looking with awe in the magical  
 mirror,  
 I see through my tears,  
 Half doubtful of seeing,  
 The face unperturbed,  
 The warm golden being  
 Of a child of five years ;  
 And spite of the mists and the error,  
 And the days overcast,  
 Can feel that I walk undeserted,  
 But forever attended  
 By the glad heavens that bended  
 O'er the innocent past ;  
 Toward fancy or truth  
 Doth the sweet vision win me ?  
 Dare I think that I cast  
 In the fountain of youth  
 The fleeting reflection  
 Of some bygone perfection  
 That still lingers in me ?

## YUSSOUF.

A STRANGER came one night to Yus-  
 souf's tent,  
 Saying, "Behold one outcast and in  
 dread,  
 Against whose life the bow of power is  
 bent,  
 Who flies, and hath not where to lay  
 his head ;  
 I come to thee for shelter and for food,  
 To Yussouf, called through all our tribes  
 "The Good."

"This tent is mine," said Yussouf, "but  
 no more  
 Than it is God's ; come in, and be at  
 peace ;  
 Freely shalt thou partake of all my  
 store  
 As I of His who buildeth over these  
 Our tents his glorious roof of night and  
 day,  
 And at whose door none ever yet heard  
 Nay."

So Yussouf entertained his guest that  
 night,  
 And, waking him ere day, said : "Here  
 is gold ;  
 My swiftest horse is saddled for thy  
 flight ;  
 Depart before the prying day grow  
 bold."

As one lamp lights another, nor grows  
 less,  
 So nobleness enkindleth nobleness.

That inward light the stranger's face  
 made grand,  
 Which shines from all self-conquest ;  
 kneeling low,  
 He bowed his forehead upon Yussouf's  
 hand,  
 Sobbing : "O Sheik, I cannot leave thee  
 so ;  
 I will repay thee ; all this thou hast  
 done  
 Unto that Ibrahim who slew thy son !"

"Take thrice the gold," said Yussouf,  
 "for with thee  
 Into the desert, never to return,  
 My one black thought shall ride away  
 from me ;  
 First-born, for whom by day and night  
 I yearn,  
 Balanced and just are all of God's de-  
 crees ;  
 Thou art avenged, my first-born, sleep  
 in peace ;"

## THE DARKENED MIND.

THE fire is burning clear and blithely,  
 Pleasantly whistles the winter wind ;  
 We are about thee, thy friends and kin-  
 dred,  
 On us all flickers the firelight kind ;  
 There thou sittest in thy wonted corner  
 Lone and awful in thy darkened mind.

There thou sittest ; now and then thou  
 moanest ;  
 Thou dost talk with what we cannot see,  
 Lookest at us with an eye so doubtful,  
 It doth put us very far from thee ;  
 There thou sittest ; we would fain be  
 nigh thee,  
 But we know that it can never be.

We can touch thee, still we are no  
 nearer ;  
 Gather round thee, still thou art alone ;  
 The wide chasm of reason is between us ;  
 Thou confutest kindness with a moan ;  
 We can speak to thee, and thou canst  
 answer,  
 Like two prisoners through a wall of  
 stone.

Hardest heart would call it very awful  
 When thou look'st at us and seest — O,  
 what ?  
 If we move away, thou sittest gazing  
 With those vague eyes at the selfsame  
 spot,  
 And thou mutterest, thy hands thou  
 wringest,  
 Seeing something, — us thou seest not.

Strange it is that, in this open bright-  
 ness,  
 Thou shouldst sit in such a narrow cell ;  
 Strange it is that thou shouldst be so  
 lonesome  
 Where those are who love thee all so  
 well ;  
 Not so much of thee is left among us  
 As the hum outliving the hushed bell.

WHAT RABBI JEHOSSA SAID.

RABBI JEHOSSA used to say  
 That God made angels every day,  
 Perfect as Michael and the rest  
 First brooded in creation's nest,  
 Whose only office was to cry  
*Hosanna!* once, and then to die ;  
 Or rather, with Life's essence blent,  
 To be led home from banishment.

Rabbi Jehosha had the skill  
 To know that Heaven is in God's will ;  
 And doing that, though for a space  
 One heart-beat long, may win a grace  
 As full of grandeur and of glow  
 As Princes of the Chariot know.

'T were glorious, no doubt, to be  
 One of the strong-winged Hierarchy,  
 To burn with Seraphs, or to shine  
 With Cherubs, deathlessly divine ;  
 Yet I, perhaps, poor earthly clod,  
 Could I forget myself in God,  
 Could I but find my nature's clew  
 Simply as birds and blossoms do,  
 And but for one rapt moment know  
 'T is Heaven must come, not we must go,  
 Should win my place as near the throne  
 As the pearl-angel of its zone,  
 And God would listen mid the throng  
 For my one breath of perfect song,  
 That, in its simple human way,  
 Said all the Host of Heaven could say.

ALL-SAINTS.

ONE feast, of holy days the crest,  
 I, though no Churchman, love to  
 keep,  
 All-Saints, — the unknown good that  
 rest  
 In God's still memory folded deep ;  
 The bravely dumb that did their deed,  
 And scorned to blot it with a name,  
 Men of the plain heroic breed,  
 That loved Heaven's silence more than  
 fame.

Such lived not in the past alone,  
 But thread to-day the unheeding  
 street,  
 And stairs to Sin and Famine known  
 Sing with the welcome of their feet ;  
 The den they enter grows a shrine,  
 The grimy sash an oriel burns,  
 Their cup of water warms like wine,  
 Their speech is filled from heavenly  
 urns.

About their brows to me appears  
 An aureole traced in tenderest light,  
 The rainbow-gleam of smiles through  
 tears  
 In dying eyes, by them made bright,  
 Of souls that shivered on the edge  
 Of that chill ford repassed no more,  
 And in their mercy felt the pledge  
 And sweetness of the farther shore.

A WINTER-EVENING HYMN TO MY  
 FIRE

I.

BEAUTY on my hearth-stone blazing !  
 To-night the triple Zoroaster  
 Shall my prophet be and master :  
 To-night will I pure Magian be,  
 Hymns to thy sole honor raising,  
 While thou leapest fast and faster,  
 Wild with self-delighted glee,  
 Or sink'st low and glowest faintly  
 As an aureole still and saintly,  
 Keeping cadence to my praising  
 Thee ! still thee ! and only thee !

II.

Elfish daughter of Apollo !  
 Thee, from thy father stolen and bound



To serve in Vulcan's clangorous smithy  
 Prometheus (primal Yankee) found,  
 And, when he had tampered with thee,  
 (Too confiding little maid !)  
 In a reed's precarious hollow  
 To our frozen earth conveyed :  
 For he swore I know not what ;  
 Endless ease should be thy lot,  
 Pleasure that should never falter,  
 Lifelong play, and not a duty  
 Save to hover o'er the altar,  
 Vision of celestial beauty,  
 Fed with precious woods and spices ;  
 Then, perfidious ! having got  
 Thee in the net of his devices,  
 Sold thee into endless slavery,  
 Made thee a drudge to boil the pot,  
 Thee, Helios' daughter, who dost bear  
 His likeness in thy golden hair ;  
 Thee, by nature wild and wavery,  
 Palpitating, evanescent  
 As the shade of Dian's crescent,  
 Life, motion, gladness, everywhere !

## III.

Fathom deep men bury thee  
 In the furnace dark and still,  
 There, with dreariest mockery,  
 Making thee eat, against thy will,  
 Blackest Pennsylvanian stone ;  
 But thou dost avenge thy doom,  
 For, from out thy catacomb,  
 Day and night thy wrath is blown  
 In a withering simoom,  
 And, adown that cavern drear,  
 Thy black pitfall in the floor,  
 Staggers the lusty antique cheer,  
 Despairing, and is seen no more !

## IV.

Elfish I may rightly name thee ;  
 We enslave, but cannot tame thee ;  
 With fierce snatches, now and then,  
 Thou pluckest at thy right again,  
 And thy down-trod instincts savage  
 To stealthy insurrection creep,  
 While thy wittol masters sleep,  
 And burst in undiscerning ravage :  
 Then how thou shak'st thy bacchant  
 locks !  
 While brazen pulses, far and near,  
 Throb thick and thicker, wild with fear  
 And dread conjecture, till the drear  
 Disordered clangor every steeple rocks !

## V.

But when we make a friend of thee,  
 And admit thee to the hall  
 On our nights of festival,  
 Then, Cinderella, who could see  
 In thee the kitchen's stunted thrall ?  
 Once more a Princess lithe and tall,  
 Thou dancest with a whispering tread,  
 While the bright marvel of thy head  
 In crinkling gold floats all abroad,  
 And gloriously dost vindicate  
 The legend of thy lineage great,  
 Earth-exiled daughter of the Pythian  
 god !

Now in the ample chimney-place,  
 To honor thy acknowledged race,  
 We crown thee high with laurel good,  
 Thy shining father's sacred wood,  
 Which, guessing thy ancestral right,  
 Sparkles and snaps its dumb delight,  
 And, at thy touch, poor outcast one,  
 Feels through its gladdened fibres go  
 The tingle and thrill and vassal glow  
 Of instincts loyal to the sun.

## VI.

O thou of home the guardian Lar,  
 And, when our earth hath wandered far  
 Into the cold, and deep snow covers  
 The walks of our New England lovers,  
 Their sweet secluded evening-star !  
 'T was with thy rays the English Muse  
 Ripened her mild domestic hues ;  
 'T was by thy flicker that she conned  
 The fireside wisdom that enrings  
 With light from heaven familiar things ;  
 By thee she found the homely faith  
 In whose mild eyes thy comfort stay'th,  
 When Death, extinguishing his torch,  
 Gropes for the latch-string in the porch ;  
 The love that wanders not beyond  
 His earliest nest, but sits and sings  
 While children smooth his patient  
 wings ;  
 Therefore with thee I love to read  
 Our brave old poets : at thy touch how  
 stirs  
 Life in the withered words ! how swift  
 recede  
 Time's shadows ! and how glows again  
 Through its dead mass the incandescent  
 verse,  
 As when upon the anvils of the brain  
 It glittering lay, cyclopedically wrought  
 By the fast-throbbing hammers of the  
 poet's thought !

Thou murmurest, too, divinely stirred,  
The aspirations unattained,  
The rhythms so rathe and delicate,  
They bent and strained  
And broke, beneath the sombre weight  
Of any airiest mortal word.

## VII.

What warm protection dost thou bend  
Round curtained talk of friend with  
friend,

While the gray snow-storm, held aloof,  
To softest outline rounds the roof,  
Or the rude North with baffled strain  
Shoulders the frost-starred window-pane !  
Now the kind nymph to Bacchus born  
By Morpheus' daughter, she that seems  
Gifted upon her natal morn  
By him with fire, by her with dreams,  
Nicotia, dearer to the Muse  
Than all the grape's bewildering juice,  
We worship, unforbid of thee ;  
And, as her incense floats and curls  
In airy spires and wayward whirls,  
Or poises on its tremulous stalk  
A flower of frailest revery,  
So winds and loiters, idly free,  
The current of unguided talk,  
Now laughter-rippled, and now caught  
In smooth, dark pools of deeper thought.  
Meanwhile thou mellowest every word,  
A sweetly unobtrusive third ;  
For thou hast magic beyond wine,  
To unlock natures each to each ;  
The unspoken thought thou canst  
divine ;

Thou fill'st the pauses of the speech  
With whispers that to dream-land reach  
And frozen fancy-springs unchain  
In Arctic outskirts of the brain ;  
Sun of all inmost confidences,  
To thy rays doth the heart unclose  
Its formal calyx of pretences,  
That close against rude day's offences,  
And open its shy midnight rose !

## VII.

Thou holdest not the master key  
With which thy Sire sets free the mystic  
gates  
Of Past and Future : not for common  
fates  
Do they wide open fling,  
And, with a far-heard ring,  
Swing back their willing valves melo-  
diously ;

Only to ceremonial days,  
And great processions of imperial song  
That set the world at gaze,  
Doth such high privilege belong :  
But thou a postern-door canst ope  
To humbler chambers of the selfsame  
palace

Where Memory lodges, and her sister  
Hope,  
Whose being is but as a crystal chalice  
Which, with her various mood, the  
elder fills  
Of joy or sorrow,  
So coloring as she wills  
With hues of yesterday the unconscious  
morrow.

## IX.

Thou sinkest, and my fancy sinks with  
thee :  
For thee I took the idle shell,  
And struck the unused chords again,  
But they are gone who listened well ;  
Some are in heaven, and all are far from  
me :  
Even as I sing, it turns to pain,  
And with vain tears my eyelids throb  
and swell :  
Enough ; I come not of the race  
That hawk their sorrows in the market-  
place.  
Earth stops the ears I best had loved to  
please ;  
Then break, ye untuned chords, or rust  
in peace !  
As if a white-haired actor should come  
back  
Some midnight to the theatre void and  
black,  
And there rehearse his youth's great  
part  
Mid thin applauses of the ghosts,  
So seems it now : ye crowd upon my  
heart,  
And I bow down in silence, shadowy  
hosts !

## FANCY'S CASUISTRY.

How struggles with the tempest's swells  
That warning of tumultuous bells !  
The fire is loose ! and frantic knells  
Throb fast and faster,  
As tower to tower confusedly tells  
News of disaster.

But on my far-off solitude  
 No harsh alarms can intrude ;  
 The terror comes to me subdued  
 And charmed by distance,  
 To deepen the habitual mood  
 Of my existence.

Are those, I muse, the Easter chimes ?  
 And listen, weaving careless rhymes  
 While the loud city's griefs and crimes  
 Pay gentle allegiance  
 To the fine quiet that sublines  
 These dreamy regions.

And when the storm o'erwhelms the  
 shore,  
 I watch entranced as, o'er and o'er,  
 The light revolves amid the roar  
 So still and saintly,  
 Now large and near, now more and  
 more  
 Withdrawing faintly.

This, too, despairing sailors see  
 Flash out the breakers 'neath their lee  
 In sudden snow, then lingeringly  
 Wane tow'rd eclipse,  
 While through the dark the shuddering  
 sea  
 Gropes for the ships.

And is it right, this mood of mind  
 That thus, in revery enshrined,  
 Can in the world mere topics find  
 For musing stricture,  
 Seeing the life of humankind  
 Only as picture ?

The events in line of battle go ;  
 In vain for me their trumpets blow  
 As unto him that lieth low  
 In death's dark arches,  
 And through the sod hears throbbing  
 slow  
 The muffled marches.

O Duty, am I dead to thee  
 In this my cloistered ecstasy,  
 In this lone shallop on the sea  
 That drifts tow'rd Silence ?  
 And are those visioned shores I see  
 But sirens' islands ?

My Dante frowns with lip-locked mien,  
 As who would say, " 'T is those, I ween,  
 Whom lifelong armor-chafe makes lean  
 That win the laurel " ;

But where *is* Truth ? What does it  
 mean,  
 The world-old quarrel ?

Such questionings are idle air :  
 Leave what to do and what to spare  
 To the inspiring moment's care,  
 Nor ask for payment  
 Of fame or gold, but just to wear  
 Unspotted raiment.

TO MR. JOHN BARTLETT,

WHO HAD SENT ME A SEVEN-POUND  
 TROUT.

FIT for an Abbot of Theleme,  
 For the whole Cardinals' College, or  
 The Pope himself to see in dream  
 Before his lenten vision gleam,  
 He lies there, the sogdologer !

His precious flanks with stars besprent,  
 Worthy to swim in Castaly !  
 The friend by whom such gifts are sent,  
 For him shall bumpers full be spent,  
 His health ! be Luck his fast ally !

I see him trace the wayward brook  
 Amid the forest mysteries,  
 Where at their shades shy aspens look,  
 Or where, with many a gurgling crook,  
 It croons its woodland histories.

I see leaf-shade and sun-fleck lend  
 Their tremulous, sweet vicissitude  
 To smooth, dark pool, to crinkling  
 bend,—  
 (O, stew him, Ann, as 't were your  
 friend,  
 With amorous solicitude !)

I see him step with caution due,  
 Soft as if shod with moccasins,  
 Grave as in church, for who plies you,  
 Sweet craft, is safe as in a pew  
 From all our common stock o' sins.

The unerring fly I see him cast,  
 That as a rose-leaf falls as soft,  
 A flash ! a whirl ! he has him fast !  
 We tyros, how that struggle last  
 Confuses and appalls us oft.

Unflattered he : calm as the sky  
 Looks on our tragi-comedies,



This way and that he lets him fly,  
A sunbeam-shuttle, then to die  
Lands him, with cool *aplomb*, at  
ease.

The friend who gave our board such gust,  
Life's care may he o'erstep it half,  
And, when Death hooks him, as he must,  
He 'll do it handsomely, I trust,  
And John H—— write his epitaph !

O, born beneath the Fishes' sign,  
Of constellations happiest,  
May he somewhere with Walton dine,  
May Horace send him Massic wine,  
And Burns Scotch drink, the nap-  
piest !

And when they come his deeds to weigh,  
And how he used the talents his,  
One trout-scale in the scales he 'll lay  
(If trout had scales), and 't will outsway  
The wrong side of the balances.

## ODE TO HAPPINESS.

SPRIT, that rarely comest now  
And only to contrast my gloom,  
Like rainbow-feathered birds that  
bloom

A moment on some autumn bough  
That, with the spurn of their farewell,  
Sheds its last leaves, — thou once didst  
dwell

With me year-long, and make intense  
To boyhood's wisely vacant days  
Their fleet but all-sufficing grace  
Of trustful inexperience,

While soul could still transfigure sense,  
And thrill, as with love's first caress,  
At life's mere unexpectedness.

Days when my blood would leap and  
run

As full of sunshine as a breeze,  
Or spray tossed up by Summer seas  
That doubts if it be sea or sun !

Days that flew swiftly like the band  
That played in Grecian games at strife,  
And passed from eager hand to hand  
The onward-dancing torch of life !

Wing-footed ! thou abid'st with him  
Who asks it not ; but he who hath  
Watched o'er the waves thy waning  
path,  
Shall nevermore behold returning

Thy high-heaped canvas shoreward  
yearning !

Thou first reveal'st to us thy face  
Turned o'er the shoulder's parting grace,  
A moment glimpsed, then seen no  
more, —

Thou whose swift footsteps we can trace  
Away from every mortal door.

Nymph of the unreturning feet,  
How may I win thee back ? But no,  
I do thee wrong to call thee so ;

'T is I am changed, not thou art fleet :  
The man thy presence feels again,  
Not in the blood, but in the brain,  
Spirit, that lov'st the upper air  
Serene and passionless and rare,  
Such as on mountain heights we find  
And wide-viewed uplands of the  
mind ;

Or such as scorns to coil and sing  
Round any but the eagle's wing  
Of souls that with long upward beat  
Have won an undisturbed retreat  
Where, poised like winged victories,  
They mirror in relentless eyes  
The life broad-basking 'neath their  
feet, —

Man ever with his Now at strife,  
Pained with first gasps of earthly air,  
Then praying Death the last to spare,  
Still fearful of the ampler life.

Not unto them dost thou consent  
Who, passionless, can lead at ease  
A life of unalloyed content  
A life like that of land-locked seas,  
Who feel no elemental gush  
Of tidal forces, no fierce rush  
Of storm deep-grasping scarcely spent  
'Twixt continent and continent.  
Such quiet souls have never known  
Thy truer inspiration, thou  
Who lov'st to feel upon thy brow  
Spray from the plunging vessel thrown  
Grazing the tusked lee shore, the cliff  
That o'er the abrupt gorge holds its  
breath,

Where the frail hair-breadth of an *if*  
Is all that sunders life and death :  
These, too, are cared-for, and round these  
Bends her mild crook thy sister Peace ;  
These in unvexed dependence lie,  
Each 'neath his strip of household sky ;  
O'er these clouds wander, and the blue  
Hangs motionless the whole day  
through ;

Stars rise for them, and moons grow  
 large  
 And lessen in such tranquil wise  
 As joys and sorrows do that rise  
 Within their nature's sheltered marge ;  
 Their hours into each other flit  
 Like the leaf-shadows of the vine  
 And fig-tree under which they sit,  
 And their still lives to heaven incline  
 With an unconscious habitude,  
 Unhistoried as smokes that rise  
 From happy hearths and sight elude  
 In kindred blue of morning skies.

Wayward ! when once we feel thy lack,  
 'T is worse than vain to woo thee back !  
 Yet there is one who seems to be  
 Thine elder sister, in whose eyes  
 A faint far northern light will rise  
 Sometimes, and bring a dream of thee ;  
 She is not that for which youth hoped,  
 But she hath blessings all her own,  
 Thoughts pure as lilies newly oped,  
 And faith to sorrow given alone :  
 Almost I deem that it is thou  
 Come back with graver matron brow,  
 With deepened eyes and bated breath,  
 Like one that somewhere hath met  
 Death,  
 But "No," she answers, "I am she  
 Whom the gods love, Tranquillity :  
 That other whom you seek forlorn  
 Half earthly was ; but I am born  
 Of the immortals, and our race  
 Wears still some sadness on its face :  
 He wins me late, but keeps me long,  
 Who, dowered with every gift of passion,  
 In that fierce flame can forge and  
 fashion

Of sin and self the anchor strong ;  
 Can thence compel the driving force  
 Of daily life's mechanic course,  
 Nor less the nobler energies  
 Of needful toil and culture wise ;  
 Whose soul is worth the tempter's lure  
 Who can renounce, and yet endure,  
 To him I come, not lightly wooed,  
 But won by silent fortitude."

## VILLA FRANCA.

1859.

WAIT a little : do we not wait ?  
 Louis Napoleon is not Fate,  
 Francis Joseph is not Time ;

There's One hath swifter feet than  
 Crime ;  
 Cannon-parliaments settle naught ;  
 Venice is Austria's, — whose is Thought !  
 Minié is good, but, spite of change,  
 Gutenberg's gun has the longest range.  
 Spin, spin, Clotho, spin !  
 Lachesis, twist ! and, Atropos, sever !  
 In the shadow, year out, year in,  
 The silent headsman waits forever.

Wait, we say : our years are long ;  
 Men are weak, but Man is strong ;  
 Since the stars first curved their rings,  
 We have looked on many things ;  
 Great wars come and great wars go,  
 Wolf-tracks light on polar snow ;  
 We shall see him come and gone,  
 This second-hand Napoleon.  
 Spin, spin, Clotho, spin !  
 Lachesis, twist ! and, Atropos, sever !  
 In the shadow, year out, year in,  
 The silent headsman waits forever.

We saw the elder Corsican,  
 And Clotho muttered as she span,  
 While crowned lackeys bore the train,  
 Of the pinchbeck Charlemagne :  
 "Sister, stint not length of thread !  
 Sister, stay the scissors dread !  
 On Saint Helen's granite bleak,  
 Hark, the vulture whets his beak !"  
 Spin, spin, Clotho, spin !  
 Lachesis, twist ! and, Atropos, sever !  
 In the shadow, year out, year in,  
 The silent headsman waits forever.

The Bonapartes, we know their bees  
 That wade in honey red to the knees ;  
 Their patent reaper, its sheaves sleep  
 sound

In dreamless garners underground :  
 We know false glory's spendthrift race  
 Pawning nations for feathers and lace ;  
 It may be short, it may be long,  
 " 'T is reckoning-day ! " sneers unpaid  
 Wrong.

Spin, spin, Clotho, spin !  
 Lachesis, twist ! and, Atropos, sever !  
 In the shadow, year out, year in,  
 The silent headsman waits forever.

The Cock that wears the Eagle's skin  
 Can promise what he ne'er could win ;  
 Slavery reaped for fine words sown,

System for all, and rights for none,  
 Despots atop, a wild clan below,  
 Such is the Gaul from long ago ;  
 Wash the black from the Ethiop's face,  
 Wash the past out of man or race !  
 Spin, spin, Clotho, spin !  
 Lachesis, twist ! and, Atropos, sever !  
 In the shadow, year out, year in,  
 The silent headsman waits forever.

'Neath Gregory's throne a spider swings,  
 And snares the people for the kings ;  
 " Luther is dead ; old quarrels pass ;  
 The stake's black scars are healed with  
 grass " ;

So dreamers prate ; did man e'er live  
 Saw priest or woman yet forgive ?  
 But Luther's broom is left, and eyes  
 Peep o'er their creeds to where it lies.  
 Spin, spin, Clotho, spin !  
 Lachesis, twist ! and, Atropos, sever !  
 In the shadow, year out, year in,  
 The silent headsman waits forever.

Smooth sails the ship of either realm,  
 Kaiser and Jesuit at the helm ;  
 We look down the depths, and mark  
 Silent workers in the dark  
 Building slow the sharp-tusked reefs,  
 Old instincts hardening to new beliefs ;  
 Patience a little ; learn to wait ;  
 Hours are long on the clock of Fate.  
 Spin, spin, Clotho, spin !  
 Lachesis, twist ! and, Atropos, sever !  
 Darkness is strong, and so is Sin,  
 But surely God endures forever !

#### THE MINER.

Down mid the tangled roots of things  
 That coil about the central fire,  
 I seek for that which giveth wings  
 To stoop, not soar, to my desire.

Sometimes I hear, as 't were a sigh,  
 The sea's deep yearning far above,  
 " Thou hast the secret not," I cry,  
 " In deeper deeps is hid my Love."

They think I burrow from the sun,  
 In darkness, all alone, and weak ;  
 Such loss were gain if He were won,  
 For 't is the sun's own Sun I seek.

" The earth," they murmur, " is the  
 tomb  
 That vainly sought his life to prison ;  
 Why grovel longer in the gloom ?  
 He is not here ; he hath arisen."

More life for me where he hath lain  
 Hidden while ye believed him dead,  
 Than in cathedrals cold and vain,  
 Built on loose sands of *It is said*.

My search is for the living gold ;  
 Him I desire who dwells recluse,  
 And not his image worn and old,  
 Day-servant of our sordid use.

If him I find not, yet I find  
 The ancient joy of cell and church,  
 The glimpse, the surety undefined,  
 The unquenched ardor of the search.

Happier to chase a flying goal  
 Than to sit counting laurelled gains,  
 To guess the Soul within the soul  
 Than to be lord of what remains.

Hide still, best Good, in subtile wise,  
 Beyond my nature's utmost scope ;  
 Be ever absent from mine eyes  
 To be twice present in my hope !

#### GOLD EGG: A DREAM-FANTASY.

HOW A STUDENT IN SEARCH OF THE  
 BEAUTIFUL FELL ASLEEP IN DRES-  
 DEN OVER HERR PROFESSOR DOCTOR  
 VISCHER'S WISSENSCHAFT DES SCHÖ-  
 NEN, AND WHAT CAME THEREOF.

I SWAM with undulation soft,  
 Adrift on Vischer's ocean,  
 And, from my cockboat up aloft,  
 Sent down my mental plummet oft  
 In hope to reach a notion.

But from the metaphysic sea  
 No bottom was forthcoming,  
 And all the while (how drearily !)  
 In one eternal note of B  
 My German stove kept humming.

" What 's Beauty ?" mused I ; " is it  
 told  
 By synthesis ? analysis ?



Have you not made us lead of gold ?  
To feed your crucible, not sold  
Our temple's sacred chalices !”

Then o'er my senses came a change ;  
My book seemed all traditions,  
Old legends of profoundest range,  
Diabery, and stories strange  
Of goblins, elves, magicians.

Old gods in modern saints I found,  
Old creeds in strange disguises ;  
I thought them safely underground,  
And here they were, all safe and sound,  
Without a sign of phthisis.

Truth was, my outward eyes were closed,  
Although I did not know it ;  
Deep into dream-land I had dozed,  
And so was happily transposed  
From proser into poet.

So what I read took flesh and blood,  
And turned to living creatures :  
The words were but the dingy bud  
That bloomed, like Adam, from the mud,  
To human forms and features.

I saw how Zeus was lodged once more  
By Baucis and Philemon ;  
The text said, “ Not alone of yore,  
But every day, at every door,  
Knocks still the masking Demon.”

DAIMON 't was printed in the book  
And, as I read it slowly,  
The letters stirred and changed, and  
took  
Jove's stature, the Olympian look  
Of painless melancholy.

He paused upon the threshold worn :  
“ With coin I cannot pay you ;  
Yet would I fain make some return ;  
The gift for cheapness do not spurn.  
Accept this hen, I pray you.

“ Plain feathers wears my Hemera,  
And has from ages olden ;  
She makes her nest in common hay,  
And yet, of all the birds that lay,  
Her eggs alone are golden.”

He turned, and could no more be seen ;  
Old Baucis stared a moment,

Then tossed poor Partlet on the green,  
And with a tone, half jest, half spleen,  
Thus made her housewife's comment :

“ The stranger had a queerish face,  
His smile was hardly pleasant,  
And, though he meant it for a grace,  
Yet this old hen of barnyard race  
Was but a stingy present.

“ She's quite too old for laying eggs,  
Nay, even to make a soup of ;  
One only needs to see her legs, —  
You might as well boil down the pegs  
I made the brood-hen's coop of !

“ Some eighteen score of such do I  
Raise every year, her sisters ;  
Go, in the woods your fortunes try,  
All day for one poor earthworm pry,  
And scratch your toes to blisters !”

Philemon found the rede was good,  
And, turning on the poor hen,  
He clapt his hands, and stamped, and  
shooed,  
Hunting the exile tow'rd the wood,  
To house with snipe and moor-hen.

A poet saw and cried : “ Hold ! hold !  
What are you doing, madman ?  
Spurn you more wealth than can be  
told,  
The fowl that lays the eggs of gold,  
Because she's plainly clad, man ?”

To him Philemon : “ I 'll not balk  
Thy will with any shackle ;  
Wilt add a burden to thy walk ?  
There ! take her without further talk ;  
You're both but fit to cackle !”

But scarce the poet touched the bird,  
It swelled to stature regal ;  
And when her cloud-wide wings she  
stirred,  
A whisper as of doom was heard,  
'T was Jove's bolt-bearing eagle.

As when from far-off cloud-bergs springs  
A crag, and, hurtling under,  
From cliff to cliff the rumor flings,  
So she from flight-foreboding wings  
Shook out a murmurous thunder.

She gripped the poet to her breast,  
And ever, upward soaring,  
Earth seemed a new moon in the west,  
And then one light among the rest  
Where squadrons lie at mooring.

How tell to what heaven-hallowed seat  
The eagle bent his courses?  
The waves that on its bases beat,  
The gales that round it weave and fleet,  
Are life's creative forces.

Here was the bird's primeval nest,  
High on a promontory  
Star-pharosed, where she takes her rest  
To brood new sons 'neath her breast,  
The future's unpledged glory.

I know not how, but I was there  
All feeling, hearing, seeing;  
It was not wind that stirred my hair  
But living breath, the essence rare  
Of unembodied being.

And in the nest an egg of gold  
Lay soft in self-made lustre,  
Gazing whereon, what depths untold  
Within, what marvels manifold,  
Seemed silently to muster!

Daily such splendors to confront  
Is still to me and you sent?  
It glowed as when Saint Peter's front,  
Illumed, forgets its stony wont,  
And seems to throb translucent.

One saw therein the life of man,  
(Or so the poet found it,  
The yolk and white, conceive who can,  
Were the glad earth, that, floating, span  
In the glad heaven around it.

I knew this as one knows in dream,  
Where no effects to causes  
Are chained as in our work-day scheme,  
And then was wakened by a scream  
That seemed to come from Baucis.

"Bless Zeus!" she cried, "I'm safe  
below!"

First pale, then red as coral;  
And I, still drowsy, pondered slow,  
And seemed to find, but hardly know,  
Something like this for moral.

Each day the world is born anew  
For him who takes it rightly;

Not fresher that which Adam knew,  
Not sweeter that whose moonlit dew  
Entranced Arcadia nightly.

Rightly? That's simply: 't is to see  
*Some substance casts these shadows*  
Which we call Life and History,  
That aimless seem to chase and flee  
Like wind-gleams over meadows.

Simply? That's nobly: 't is to know  
That God may still be met with,  
Nor groweth old, nor doth bestow  
These senses fine, this brain aglow,  
To grovel and forget with.

Beauty, Herr Doctor, trust in me,  
No chemistry will win you;  
Charis still rises from the sea:  
If you can't find her, *might it be*  
Because you seek within you?

## A FAMILIAR EPISTLE TO A FRIEND.

ALIKE I hate to be your debtor,  
Or write a mere perfunctory letter;  
For letters, so it seems to me,  
Our careless quintessence should be,  
Our real nature's truant play  
When Consciousness looks t' other way  
Not drop by drop, with watchful skill,  
Gathered in Art's deliberate still,  
But life's insensible completeness  
Got as the ripe grape gets its sweetness,  
As if it had a way to fuse  
The golden sunlight into juice.  
Hopeless my mental pump I try;  
The boxes hiss, the tube is dry;  
As those petroleum wells that spout  
Awhile like M. C.'s, then give out,  
My spring, once full as Arethusa,  
Is a mere bore as dry's Creusa;  
And yet you ask me why I'm glum,  
And why my graver Muse is dumb.  
Ah me! I've reasons manifold  
Condensed in one, — I'm getting old!

When life, once past its fortieth year,  
Wheels up its evening hemisphere,  
The mind's own shadow, which the boy  
Saw onward point to hope and joy,  
Shifts round, irrevocably set  
Tow'rd morning's loss and vain regret,  
And, argue with it as we will,  
The clock is unconverted still.

“But count the gains,” I hear you say,  
 “Which far the seeming loss outweigh;  
 Friendships built firm 'gainst flood and  
 wind

On rock-foundations of the mind;  
 Knowledge instead of scheming hope;  
 For wild adventure, settled scope;  
 Talents, from surface-ore profuse,  
 Tempered and edged to tools for use;  
 Judgment, for passion's headlong whirls;  
 Old sorrows crystallized into pearls;  
 Losses by patience turned to gains,  
 Possessions now, that once were pains;  
 Joy's blossom gone, as go it must,  
 To ripen seeds of faith and trust;  
 Why heed a snow-flake on the roof  
 If fire within keep Age aloof  
 Though blundering north-winds push  
 and strain  
 With palms benumbed against the pane?”

My dear old Friend, you're very wise;  
 We always are with others' eyes,  
 And see so clear! (our neighbor's deck  
 on)

What reef the idiot's sure to wreck on;  
 Folks when they learn how life has  
 quizzed 'em

Are fain to make a shift with Wisdom,  
 And, finding she nor breaks nor bends,  
 Give her a letter to their friends.  
 Draw passion's torrent whoso will  
 Through sluices smooth to turn a mill,  
 And, taking solid toll of grist,  
 Forget the rainbow in the mist,  
 The exulting leap, the aimless haste  
 Scattered in iridescent waste;  
 Prefer who likes the sure esteem  
 To cheated youth's midsummer dream,  
 When every friend was more than  
 Damon,

Each quicksand safe to build a fame on;  
 Believe that prudence snug excels  
 Youth's gross of verdant spectacles,  
 Through which earth's withered stubble  
 seen

Looks autumn-proof as painted green,—  
 I side with Moses 'gainst the masses,  
 Take you the drudge, give me the  
 glasses!

And, for your talents shaped with prac-  
 tice,

Convince me first that such the fact is;  
 Let whoso likes be beat, poor fool,  
 On life's hard stithy to a tool,  
 Be whoso will a ploughshare made,  
 Let me remain a jolly blade!

What's Knowledge, with her stocks and  
 lands,

To gay Conjecture's yellow strands?  
 What's watching her slow flocks in-  
 crease

To ventures for the golden fleece?  
 What her deep ships, safe under lee,  
 To youth's light craft, that drinks the  
 sea,

For Flying Islands making sail,  
 And failing where 't is gain to fail?  
 Ah me! Experience (so we're told),  
 Time's crucible, turns lead to gold;  
 Yet what's experience won but dross,  
 Cloud-gold transmuted to our loss?  
 What but base coin the best event  
 To the untried experiment?

“T was an old couple, says the poet,  
 That lodged the gods and did not know  
 it;

Youth sees and knows them as they  
 were

Before Olympus' top was bare;  
 From Swampscot's flats his eye divine  
 Sees Venus rocking on the brine,  
 With lucent limbs, that somehow scat-  
 ter a

Charm that turns Doll to Cleopatra;  
 Bacchus (that now is scarce induced  
 To give Eld's lagging blood a boost),  
 With cymbals' clang and pards to draw  
 him,

Divine as Ariadne saw him,  
 Storms through Youth's pulse with all  
 his train

And wins new Indies in his brain;

Apollo (with the old a trope,  
 A sort of finer Mister Pope),  
 Apollo — but the Muse forbids;  
 At his approach cast down thy lids,  
 And think it joy enough to hear  
 Far off his arrows singing clear;  
 He knows enough who silent knows  
 The quiver chiming as he goes;  
 He tells too much who e'er betrays  
 The shining Archer's secret ways.

Dear Friend, you're right and I am  
 wrong;

My quibbles are not worth a song,  
 And I sophistically tease  
 My fancy sad to tricks like these.  
 I could not cheat you if I would;  
 You know me and my jesting mood,  
 Mere surface-foam, for pride concealing  
 The purpose of my deeper feeling.



I have not spilt one drop of joy  
 Poured in the senses of the boy,  
 Nor Nature fails my walks to bless  
 With all her golden inwardness ;  
 And as blind nestlings, unafraid,  
 Stretch up wide-mouthed to every shade  
 By which their downy dream is stirred,  
 Taking it for the mother-bird,  
 So, when God's shadow, which is light,  
 Unheralded, by day or night,  
 My wakening instincts falls across,  
 Silent as sunbeams over moss,  
 In my heart's nest half-conscious things  
 Stir with a helpless sense of wings,  
 Lift themselves up, and tremble long  
 With premonitions sweet of song.

Be patient, and perhaps (who knows ?)  
 These may be winged one day like  
 those ;

If thrushes, close-embowered to sing,  
 Pierced through with June's delicious  
 sting ;

If swallows, their half-hour to run  
 Star-breasted in the setting sun.  
 At first they're but the unfledged proem,  
 Or songless schedule of a poem ;  
 When from the shell they're hardly dry  
 If some folks thrust them forth, must I ?

But let me end with a comparison  
 Never yet hit upon by e'er a son  
 Of our American Apollo,  
 (And there's where I shall beat them  
 hollow,  
 If he indeed's no courtly St. John,  
 But, as West said, a Mohawk Injun.)  
 A poem's like a cruise for whales :  
 Through untried seas the hunter sails,  
 His prow dividing waters known  
 To the blue iceberg's hulk alone ;  
 At last, on farthest edge of day,  
 He marks the smoky puff of spray ;  
 Then with bent oars the shallop flies  
 To where the basking quarry lies ;  
 Then the excitement of the strife,  
 The crimsoned waves, — ah, this is life !

But, the dead plunder once secured  
 And safe beside the vessel moored,  
 All that had stirred the blood before  
 Is so much blubber, nothing more,  
 (I mean no pun, nor image so  
 Mere sentimental verse, you know,)  
 And all is tedium, smoke, and soil,  
 In trying out the noisome oil.

Yes, this is life ! And so the bard  
 Through briny deserts, never scarred  
 Since Noah's keel, a subject seeks,  
 And lies upon the watch for weeks ;  
 That once harpooned and helpless lying,  
 What follows is but weary trying.

Now I've a notion, if a poet  
 Beat up for themes, his verse will show  
 it ;

I wait for subjects that hunt me,  
 By day or night won't let me be,  
 And hang about me like a curse,  
 Till they have made me into verse,  
 From line to line my fingers tease  
 Beyond my knowledge, as the bees  
 Build no new cell till those before  
 With limpid summer-sweet run o'er ;  
 Then, if I neither sing nor shine,  
 Is it the subject's fault, or mine ?

## AN EMBER PICTURE.

How strange are the freaks of memory !  
 The lessons of life we forget,  
 While a trifle, a trick of color,  
 In the wonderful web is set, —

Set by some mordant of fancy,  
 And, spite of the wear and tear  
 Of time or distance or trouble,  
 Insists on its right to be there.

A chance had brought us together ;  
 Our talk was of matters-of-course ;  
 We were nothing, one to the other,  
 But a short half-hour's resource.

We spoke of French acting and actors,  
 And their easy, natural way :  
 Of the weather, for it was raining  
 As we drove home from the play.

We debated the social nothings  
 We bore ourselves so to discuss ;  
 The thunderous rumors of battle  
 Were silent the while for us.

Arrived at her door, we left her  
 With a drippingly hurried adieu,  
 And our wheels went crunching the  
 gravel  
 Of the oak-darkened avenue.

As we drove away through the shadow,  
 The candle she held in the door

From rain-varnished tree-trunk to tree-trunk  
 Flashed fainter, and flashed no more ; —

Flashed fainter, then wholly faded  
 Before we had passed the wood ;  
 But the light of the face behind it  
 Went with me and stayed for good.

The vision of scarce a moment,  
 And hardly marked at the time,  
 It comes unbidden to haunt me,  
 Like a scrap of ballad-rhyme.

Had she beauty ? Well, not what they  
 call so ;  
 You may find a thousand as fair ;  
 And yet there's her face in my memory  
 With no special claim to be there.

As I sit sometimes in the twilight,  
 And call back to life in the coals  
 Old faces and hopes and fancies  
 Long buried, (good rest to their  
 souls !)

Her face shines out in the embers ;  
 I see her holding the light,  
 And hear the crunch of the gravel  
 And the sweep of the rain that night.

'T is a face that can never grow older,  
 That never can part with its gleam,  
 'T is a gracious possession forever,  
 For is it not all a dream ?

TO H. W. L.,

ON HIS BIRTHDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY,  
 1867.

I NEED not praise the sweetness of his  
 song,  
 Where limpid verse to limpid verse  
 succeeds  
 Smooth as our Charles, when, fearing  
 lest he wrong  
 The new moon's mirrored skiff, he slides  
 along,  
 Full without noise, and whispers in  
 his reeds.

With loving breath of all the winds his  
 name  
 Is blown about the world, but to his  
 friends

A sweeter secret hides behind his fame,  
 And Love steals shyly through the loud  
 acclaim  
 To murmur a *God bless you!* and there  
 ends.

As I muse backward up the checkered  
 years  
 Wherein so much was given, so much  
 was lost,  
 Blessings in both kinds, such as cheapen  
 tears, —  
 But hush ! this is not for profaner ears ;  
 Let them drink molten pearls nor  
 dream the cost.

Some suck up poison from a sorrow's  
 core,  
 As naught but nightshade grew upon  
 earth's ground ;  
 Love turned all his to heart's-ease, and  
 the more  
 Fate tried his bastions, she but forced a  
 door  
 Leading to sweeter manhood and more  
 sound.

Even as a wind-waved fountain's sway-  
 ing shade  
 Seems of mixed race, a gray wraith  
 shot with sun,  
 So through his trial faith translucent  
 rayed  
 Till darkness, half disnatured so, be-  
 trayed  
 A heart of sunshine that would fain  
 o'errun.

Surely if skill in song the shears may  
 stay  
 And of its purpose cheat the charmed  
 abyss,  
 If our poor life be lengthened by a lay,  
 He shall not go, although his presence  
 may,  
 And the next age in praise shall  
 double this.

Long days be his, and each as lusty-  
 sweet  
 As gracious natures find his song to  
 be ;  
 May Age steal on with softly-cadenced  
 feet  
 Falling in music, as for him were meet  
 Whose choicest verse is harsher-toned  
 than he !

THE NIGHTINGALE IN THE STUDY.

"COME forth!" my catbird calls to me,

"And hear me sing a cavatina

That, in this old familiar tree,  
Shall hang a garden of Alcina.

"These buttercups shall brim with wine

Beyond all Lesbian juice or Massic;

May not New England be divine?

My ode to ripening summer classic?

"Or, if to me you will not hark,

By Beaver Brook a thrush is ringing

Till all the alder-coverts dark

Seem sunshine-dappled with his singing.

"Come out beneath the unmastered sky,

With its emancipating spaces,

And learn to sing as well as I,

Without premeditated graces.

"What boot your many-volumed gains,

Those withered leaves forever turning,

To win, at best, for all your pains,

A nature mummy-wrapt in learning?

"The leaves wherein true wisdom lies

On living trees the sun are drinking;

Those white clouds, drowsing through  
the skies,

Grew not so beautiful by thinking.

"Come out!" with me the oriole cries,

Escape the demon that pursues you!

And, hark, the cuckoo weatherwise,

Still hiding farther onward, woos  
you."

"Alas, dear friend, that, all my days,

Has poured from that syringa thicket

The quaintly discontinuous lays

To which I hold a season-ticket,

"A season-ticket cheaply bought

With a dessert of pilfered berries,

And who so oft my soul hast caught

With morn and evening voluntaries,

"Deem me not faithless, if all day

Among my dusty books I linger,

No pipe, like thee, for June to play

With fancy-led, half-conscious finger.

"A bird is singing in my brain

And bubbling o'er with mingled fancies,

Gay, tragic, rapt, right heart of Spain  
Fed with the sap of old romances.

"I ask no ampler skies than those

His magic music rears above me,

No falser friends, no truer foes, —

And does not Doña Clara love me?

"Cloaked shapes, a twanging of guitars,

A rush of feet, and rapiers clashing,

Then silence deep with breathless stars,

And overhead a white hand flashing.

"O music of all moods and climes,

Vengeful, forgiving, sensuous, saintly,

Where still, between the Christian

chimes,

The Moorish cymbal tinkles faintly!

"O life borne lightly in the hand,

For friend or foe with grace Castilian!

O valley safe in Fancy's land,

Not tramped to mud yet by the mil-  
lion!

"Bird of to-day, thy songs are stale

To his, my singer of all weathers,

My Calderon, my nightingale,

My Arab soul in Spanish feathers.

"Ah, friend, these singers dead so long,

And still, God knows, in purgatory,

Give its best sweetness to all song,

To Nature's self her better glory."

IN THE TWILIGHT.

MEN say the sullen instrument,

That, from the Master's bow,

With pangs of joy or woe,

Feels music's soul through every fibre  
sent,

Whispers the ravished strings

More than he knew or meant;

Old summers in its memory glow;

The secrets of the wind it sings;

It hears the April-loosened springs;

And mixes with its mood

All it dreamed when it stood

In the murmurous pine-wood

Long ago!

The magical moonlight then

Steeped every bough and cone;



The roar of the brook in the glen  
 Came dim from the distance blown ;  
 The wind through its glooms sang low,  
 And it swayed to and fro  
 With delight as it stood,  
 In the wonderful wood,  
 Long ago !

O my life, have we not had seasons  
 That only said, Live and rejoice ?  
 That asked not for causes and reasons,  
 But made us all feeling and voice ?  
 When we went with the winds in their  
 blowing,  
 When Nature and we were peers,  
 And we seemed to share in the flowing  
 Of the inexhaustible years ?  
 Have we not from the earth drawn  
 juices  
 Too fine for earth's sordid uses ?  
 Have I heard, have I seen  
 All I feel, all I know ?  
 Doth my heart overween ?  
 Or could it have been  
 Long ago ?

Sometimes a breath floats by me,  
 An odor from Dreamland sent,  
 That makes the ghost seem nigh me  
 Of a splendor that came and went,  
 Of a life lived somewhere, I know not  
 In what diviner sphere,  
 Of memories that stay not and go not,  
 Like music heard once by an ear  
 That cannot forget or reclaim it,  
 A something so shy, it would shame  
 it  
 To make it a show,  
 A something too vague, could I  
 name it,  
 For others to know,  
 As if I had lived it or dreamed it,  
 As if I had acted or schemed it,  
 Long ago !

And yet, could I live it over,  
 This life that stirs in my brain,  
 Could I be both maiden and lover,  
 Moon and tide, bee and clover,  
 As I seem to have been, once again,  
 Could I but speak it and show it,  
 This pleasure more sharp than pain,  
 That baffles and lures me so,  
 The world should once more have a poet,  
 Such as it had  
 In the ages glad,  
 Long ago !

## THE FOOT-PATH.

It mounts athwart the windy hill  
 Through fallow slopes of upland bare,  
 And Fancy climbs with foot-fall still  
 Its narrowing curves that end in air.

By day, a warmer-hearted blue  
 Stoops softly to that topmost swell ;  
 Its thread-like windings seem a clew  
 To gracious climes where all is well.

By night, far yonder, I surmise  
 An ampler world than clips my ken,  
 Where the great stars of happier skies  
 Commingle nobler fates of men.

I look and long, then haste me home,  
 Still master of my secret rare ;  
 Once tried, the path would end in Rome,  
 But now it leads me everywhere.

Forever to the new it guides,  
 From former good, old overmuch ;  
 What Nature for her poets hides,  
 'T is wiser to divine than clutch.

The bird I list hath never come  
 Within the scope of mortal ear ;  
 My prying step would make him dumb,  
 And the fair tree, his shelter, sear.

Behind the hill, behind the sky,  
 Behind my inmost thought, he sings ;  
 No feet avail ; to hear it nigh,  
 The song itself must lend the wings.

Sing on, sweet bird, close hid, and raise  
 Those angel stairways in my brain,  
 That climb from these low-vaulted days  
 To spacious sunshines far from pain.

Sing when thou wilt, enchantment fleet,  
 I leave thy covert haunt untrod,  
 And envy Science not her feat  
 To make a twice-told tale of God.

They said the fairies tript no more,  
 And long ago that Pan was dead ;  
 'T was but that fools preferred to bore  
 Earth's rind inch-deep for truth in-  
 stead.

Pan leaps and pipes all summer long,  
 The fairies dance each full-mooned  
 night,  
 Would we but doff our lenses strong,  
 And trust our wiser eyes' delight.

City of Elf-land, just without  
 Our seeing, marvel ever new,  
 Glimpsed in fair weather, a sweet doubt  
 Sketched-in, mirage-like, on the blue.

I build thee in yon sunset cloud,  
 Whose edge allures to climb the  
 height;  
 I hear thy drowned bells, inly-loud,  
 From still pools dusk with dreams of  
 night.

Thy gates are shut to hardest will,  
 Thy countersign of long-lost speech, --

Those fountained courts, those chambers  
 still,  
 Fronting Time's far East, who shall  
 reach?

I know not, and will never pry,  
 But trust our human heart for all;  
 Wonders that from the seeker fly  
 Into an open sense may fall.

Hide in thine own soul, and surprise  
 The password of the unwary elves;  
 Seek it, thou canst not bribe their spies;  
 Unsought, they whisper it themselves.

## POEMS OF THE WAR.

### THE WASHERS OF THE SHROUD.

OCTOBER, 1861.

ALONG a river-side, I know not where,  
I walked one night in mystery of dream ;  
A chill creeps curdling yet beneath my  
hair,  
To think what chanced me by the pallid  
gleam  
Of a moon-wraith that waned through  
haunted air.

Pale fireflies pulsed within the meadow-  
mist  
Their halos, wavering thistledowns of  
light ;  
The loon, that seemed to mock some  
goblin tryst,  
Laughed ; and the echoes, huddling in  
affright,  
Like Odin's hounds, fled baying down  
the night.

Then all was silent, till there smote my  
ear  
A movement in the stream that checked  
my breath :  
Was it the slow splash of a wading deer ?  
But something said, "This water is of  
Death !  
The Sisters wash a shroud, — ill thing  
to hear !"

I, looking then, beheld the ancient  
Three  
Known to the Greek's and to the North-  
man's creed,  
That sit in shadow of the mystic Tree,  
Still crooning, as they weave their end-  
less brede,  
One song : "Time was, Time is, and  
Time shall be."

No wrinkled crones were they, as I had  
deemed,  
But fair as yesterday, to-day, to-morrow,  
To mourner, lover, poet, ever seemed ;  
Something too high for joy, too deep for  
sorrow,  
Thrilled in their tones, and from their  
faces gleamed.

"Still men and nations reap as they  
have strawn,"  
So sang they, working at their task the  
while ;  
"The fatal raiment must be cleansed ere  
dawn :  
For Austria ? Italy ? the Sea-Queen's  
isle ?  
O'er what quenched grandeur must our  
shroud be drawn ?

"Or is it for a younger, fairer corse,  
That gathered States like children round  
his knees,  
That tamed the wave to be his posting-  
horse,  
Feller of forests, linker of the seas,  
Bridge-builder, hammerer, youngest son  
of Thor's ?

"What make we, murmur'st thou ? and  
what are we ?  
When empires must be wound, we bring  
the shroud,  
The time-old web of the implacable  
Three :  
Is it too coarse for him, the young and  
proud ?  
Earth's mightiest deigned to wear it, —  
why not he ?

"Is there no hope ?" I moaned, "so  
strong, so fair !  
Our Fowler whose proud bird would  
brook erewhile



No rival's swoop in all our western air !  
Gather the ravens, then, in funeral file  
For him, life's morn yet golden in his  
hair ?

"Leave me not hopeless, ye un pitying  
dames !  
I see, half seeing. Tell me, ye who  
scanned  
The stars, Earth's elders, still must no-  
blest aims  
Be traced upon oblivious ocean-sands ?  
Must Hesper join the wailing ghosts of  
names ?"

"When grass-blades stiffen with red  
battle-dew,  
Ye deem we choose the victor and the  
slain :  
Say, choose we them that shall be leal  
and true  
To the heart's longing, the high faith of  
brain ?  
Yet there the victory lies, if ye but  
knew.

"Three roots bear up Dominion :  
Knowledge, Will, —  
These twain are strong, but stronger yet  
the third, —  
Obedience, — 't is the great tap-root that  
still,  
Knit round the rock of Duty, is not  
stirred,  
Though Heaven-loosed tempests spend  
their utmost skill.

"Is the doom sealed for Hesper ? 'T is  
not we  
Denounce it, but the Law before all  
time :  
The brave makes danger opportunity ;  
The waverer, paltering with the chance  
sublime,  
Dwarfs it to peril : which shall Hesper  
be ?

"Hath he let vultures climb his eagle's  
seat  
To make Jove's bolts purveyors of their  
maw ?  
Hath he the Many's plaudits found more  
sweet  
Than Wisdom ? held Opinion's wind for  
Law ?  
Then let him hearken for the doomster's  
feet !

"Rough are the steps, slow-hewn in  
flintiest rock,  
States climb to power by ; slippery those  
with gold  
Down which they stumble to eternal  
mock :  
No chafferer's hand shall long the sceptre  
hold,  
Who, given a Fate to shape, would sell  
the block.

"We sing old Sagas, songs of weal and  
woe,  
Mystic because too cheaply understood ;  
Dark sayings are not ours ; men hear  
and know,  
See Evil weak, see strength alone in  
Good,  
Yet hope to stem God's fire with walls of  
tow.

"Time Was unlocks the riddle of Time  
Is,  
That offers choice of glory or of gloom ;  
The solver makes Time Shall Be surely  
his.  
But hasten, Sisters ! for even now the  
tomb  
Grates its slow hinge and calls from the  
abyss."

"But not for him," I cried, "not yet  
for him,  
Whose large horizon, westering, star by  
star  
Wins from the void to where on Ocean's  
rim  
The sunset shuts the world with golden  
bar,  
Not yet his thews shall fail, his eye grow  
dim !

"His shall be larger manhood, saved  
for those  
That walk unblenching through the  
trial-fires ;  
Not suffering, but faint heart, is worst  
of woes,  
And he no base-born son of craven sires,  
Whose eye need blench confronted with  
his foes.

"Tears may be ours, but proud, for those  
who win  
Death's royal purple in the foeman's  
lines ;

Peace, too, brings tears ; and mid the  
battle-din,  
The wiser ear some text of God divines,  
For the sheathed blade may rust with  
darker sin.

“ God, give us peace ! not such as lulls  
to sleep,  
But sword on thigh, and brow with pur-  
pose knit !  
And let our Ship of State to harbor  
sweep,  
Her ports all up, her battle-lanterns lit,  
And her leashed thunders gathering for  
their leap ! ”

So cried I with clenched hands and pas-  
sionate pain,  
Thinking of dear ones by Potomac's side ;  
Again the loon laughed mocking, and  
again  
The echoes bayed far down the night  
and died,  
While waking I recalled my wandering  
brain.

## TWO SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF BLONDEL.

AUTUMN, 1863.

### SCENE I. — *Near a castle in Germany.*

'T WERE no hard task, perchance, to win  
The popular laurel for my song ;  
'T were only to comply with sin,  
And own the crown, though snatched  
by wrong :  
Rather Truth's chaplet let me wear,  
Though sharp as death its thorns may  
sting ;  
Loyal to Loyalty, I bear  
No badge but of my rightful king.

Patient by town and tower I wait,  
Or o'er the blustering moorland go ;  
I buy no praise at cheaper rate,  
Or what faint hearts may fancy so ;  
For me, no joy in lady's bower,  
Or hall, or tourney, will I sing,  
Till the slow stars wheel round the hour  
That crowns my hero and my king.

While all the land runs red with strife,  
And wealth is won by pedler-crimes,  
Let who will find content in life

And tinkle in unmanly rhymes ;  
I wait and seek ; through dark and  
light,  
Safe in my heart my hope I bring,  
Till I once more my faith may plight  
To him my whole soul owns her king.

When power is filched by drone and  
dolt,  
And, with caught breath and flashing  
eye,  
Her knuckles whitening round the bolt,  
Vengeance leans eager from the sky,  
While this and that the people guess,  
And to the skirts of praters cling,  
Who court the crowd they should com-  
press,  
I turn in scorn to seek my king.

Shut in what tower of darkling chance  
Or dungeon of a narrow doom,  
Dream'st thou of battle-axe and lance  
That for the Cross make crashing  
room ?  
Come ! with hushed breath the battle  
waits  
In the wild van thy mace's swing ;  
While doubters parley with their fates,  
Make thou thine own and ours, my  
king !

O, strong to keep upright the old,  
And wise to buttress with the new,  
Prudent, as only are the bold,  
Clear-eyed, as only are the true,  
To foes benign, to friendship stern,  
Intent to imp Law's broken wing,  
Who would not die, if death might earn  
The right to kiss thy hand, my king !

### SCENE II. — *An Inn near the Château of Chalus.*

WELL, the whole thing is over, and here  
I sit  
With one arm in a sling and a milk-  
score of gashes,  
And this flagon of Cyprus must e'en  
warm my wit,  
Since what's left of youth's flame is a  
head flecked with ashes.  
I remember I sat in this very same  
inn, —  
I was young then, and one young man  
thought I was handsome, —

I had found out what prison King  
Richard was in,  
And was spurring for England to push  
on the ransom.

How I scorned the dull souls that sat  
guzzling around  
And knew not my secret nor recked  
my derision!

Let the world sink or swim, John or  
Richard be crowned,  
All one, so the beer-tax got lenient  
revision.

How little I dreamed, as I tramped up  
and down,  
That granting our wish one of Fate's  
saddest jokes is!

I had mine with a vengeance, — my  
king got his crown,  
And made his whole business to break  
other folks's.

I might as well join in the safe old *tum*,  
*tum* :  
A hero's an excellent loadstar, — but,  
bless ye,

What infinite odds 'twixt a hero to come  
And your only too palpable hero *in esse*!  
Precisely the odds (such examples are  
rife)

'Twixt the poem conceived and the  
rhyme we make show of,

'Twixt the boy's morning dream and the  
wake-up of life,

'Twixt the Blondel God meant and a  
Blondel I know of!

But the world's better off, I'm con-  
vinced of it now,

Than if heroes, like buns, could be  
bought for a penny

To regard all mankind as their haltered  
milch-cow,

And just care for themselves. Well,  
God cares for the many;

For somehow the poor old Earth blun-  
ders along,

Each son of hers adding his mite of  
unfitness,

And, choosing the sure way of coming  
out wrong,

Gets to port as the next generation  
will witness.

You think her old ribs have come all  
crashing through,

If a whisk of Fate's broom snap your  
cobweb asunder;

But her rivets were clinched by a wiser  
than you,

And our sins cannot push the Lord's  
right hand from under.

Better one honest man who can wait for  
God's mind

In our poor shifting scene here though  
heroes were plenty!

Better one bite, at forty, of Truth's bitter  
rind,

Than the hot wine that gushed from  
the vintage of twenty!

I see it all now: when I wanted a king,  
'T was the kingship that failed in  
myself I was seeking, —

'T is so much less easy to do than to  
sing,

So much simpler to reign by a proxy  
than *be* king!

Yes, I think I *do* see: after all's said  
and sung,

Take this one rule of life and you  
never will rue it, —

'T is but do your own duty and hold  
your own tongue

And Blondel were royal himself, if he  
knew it!

## MEMORIÆ POSITUM.

R. G. SHAW

## I.

BENEATH the trees,  
My lifelong friends in this dear spot,

Sad now for eyes that see them not,  
I hear the autumnal breeze

Wake the dry leaves to sigh for gladness  
gone,

Whispering vague omens of oblivion,  
Hear, restless as the seas,

Time's grim feet rustling through the  
withered grace

Of many a spreading realm and strong-  
stemmed race,

Even as my own through these.

Why make we moan  
For loss that doth enrich us yet

With upward yearnings of regret!  
Bleaker than unmossed stone

Our lives were but for this immortal gain  
Of unstilled longing and inspiring pain!



As thrills of long-hushed tone  
Live in the viol, so our souls grow fine  
With keen vibrations from the touch  
divine  
Of noble natures gone.

'T were indiscreet  
To vex the shy and sacred grief  
With harsh obtrusions of relief ;  
Yet, Verse, with noiseless feet,  
Go whisper : " *This* death hath far  
choicer ends  
Than slowly to impearl in hearts of  
friends ;

These obsequies 't is meet  
Not to seclude in closets of the heart,  
But, church-like, with wide doorways,  
to impart  
Even to the heedless street."

## II.

Brave, good, and true,  
I see him stand before me now,  
And read again on that young brow,  
Where every hope was new,  
*How sweet were life !* Yet, by the mouth  
firm-set,  
And look made up for Duty's utmost  
debt,  
I could divine he knew  
That death within the sulphurous hos-  
tile lines,  
In the mere wreck of nobly-pitched  
designs,  
Plucks heart's-ease, and not rue.

Happy their end  
Who vanish down life's evening stream  
Placid as swans that drift in dream  
Round the next river-bend !  
Happy long life, with honor at the  
close,  
Friends' painless tears, the softened  
thought of foes !  
And yet, like him, to spend  
All at a gush, keeping our first faith  
sure  
From mid-life's doubt and eld's content-  
ment poor,  
What more could Fortune send ?

Right in the van,  
On the red rampart's slippery swell,  
With heart that beat a charge, he fell  
Foeward, as fits a man ;

But the high soul burns on to light men's  
feet  
Where death for noble ends makes dying  
sweet ;  
His life her crescent's span  
Orbs full with share in their undarken-  
ing days  
Who ever climbed the battailous steeps  
of praise  
Since valor's praise began.

## III.

His life's expense  
Hath won him coeternal youth  
With the immaculate prime of Truth ;  
While we, who make pretence  
At living on, and wake and eat and  
sleep,  
And life's stale trick by repetition keep,  
Our fickle permanence  
(A poor leaf-shadow on a brook, whose  
play  
Of busy idlesse ceases with our day)  
Is the mere cheat of sense.

We bide our chance,  
Unhappy, and make terms with Fate  
A little more to let us wait ;  
He leads for aye the advance,  
Hope's forlorn-hopes that plant the  
desperate good  
For nobler Earths and days of manlier  
mood ;  
Our wall of circumstance  
Cleared at a bound, he flashes o'er the  
fight,  
A saintly shape of fame, to cheer the  
right  
And steel each wavering glance.

I write of one,  
While with dim eyes I think of three ;  
Who weeps not others fair and brave  
as he ?  
Ah, when the fight is won,  
Dear Land, whom triflers now make bold  
to scorn,  
(Thee ! from whose forehead Earth awaits  
her morn,)  
How nobler shall the sun  
Flame in thy sky, how braver breathe  
thy air,  
That thou bred'st children who for thee  
could dare  
And die as thine have done !

## ON BOARD THE '76.

WRITTEN FOR MR. BRYANT'S SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY.

NOVEMBER 3, 1864.

OUR ship lay tumbling in an angry sea,  
Her rudder gone, her mainmast o'er  
the side ;  
Her scuppers, from the waves' clutch  
staggering free,  
Trailed threads of priceless crimson  
through the tide ;  
Sails, shrouds, and spars with pirate  
cannon torn,  
We lay, awaiting morn.

Awaiting morn, such morn as mocks  
despair ;  
And she that bare the promise of the  
world  
Within her sides, now hopeless, helm-  
less, bare,  
At random o'er the wildering waters  
hurled ;  
The reek of battle drifting slow alee  
Not sullener than we.

Morn came at last to peer into our woe,  
When lo, a sail ! Now surely help  
was nigh ;  
The red cross flames aloft, Christ's  
pledge ; but no,  
Her black guns grinning hate, she  
rushes by  
And hails us : — " Gains the leak ! Ay,  
so we thought !  
Sink, then, with curses fraught ! "

I leaned against my gun still angry-hot,  
And my lids tingled with the tears  
held back ;  
This scorn methought was crueller than  
shot :  
The manly death-grip in the battle-  
wrack,  
Yard-arm to yard-arm, were more friendly  
far  
Than such fear-smothered war.

There our foe wallowed, like a wounded  
brute  
The fiercer for his hurt. What now  
were best ?  
Once more tug bravely at the peril's  
root,

Though death came with it ! Or  
evade the test  
If right or wrong in this God's world of  
ours  
Be leagued with mightier powers ?

Some, faintly loyal, felt their pulses lag  
With the slow beat that doubts and  
then despairs ;  
Some, caitiff, would have struck the  
starry flag  
That knits us with our past, and  
makes us heirs  
Of deeds high-hearted as were ever done  
'Neath the all-seeing sun.

But there was one, the Singer of our  
crew,  
Upon whose head Age waved his  
peaceful sign,  
But whose red heart's-blood no surren-  
der knew ;  
And couchant under brows of massive  
line,  
The eyes, like guns beneath a parapet,  
Watched, charged with lightnings  
yet.

The voices of the hills did his obey ;  
The torrents flashed and tumbled in  
his song ;  
He brought our native fields from far  
away,  
Or set us 'mid the innumerable throng  
Of dateless woods, or where we heard the  
calm  
Old homestead's evening psalm.

But now he sang of faith to things  
unseen,  
Of freedom's birthright given to us in  
trust ;  
And words of doughty cheer he spoke  
between,  
That made all earthly fortune seem as  
dust,  
Matched with that duty, old as Time  
and new,  
Of being brave and true.

We, listening, learned what makes the  
might of words, —  
Manhood to back them, constant as  
a star ;  
His voice rammed home our cannon,  
edged our swords,

And sent our boarders 'shouting ;  
 shroud and spar  
 Heard him and stiffened ; the sails heard,  
 and wooed  
 The winds with loftier mood.

In our dark hours he manned our guns  
 again ;  
 Remanned ourselves from his own  
 manhood's stores ;  
 Pride, honor, country, throbb'd through  
 all his strain ;  
 And shall we praise ? God's praise  
 was his before ;  
 And on our futile laurels he looks down,  
 Himself our bravest crown.

ODE RECITED AT THE HARVARD  
 COMMEMORATION.

JULY 21, 1865.

I.

WEAK-WINGED is song,  
 Nor aims at that clear-ethered height  
 Whither the brave deed climbs for light :  
 We seem to do them wrong,  
 Bringing our robin's-leaf to deck their  
 hearse  
 Who in warm life-blood wrote their  
 nobler verse,  
 Our trivial song to honor those who  
 come  
 With ears attuned to strenuous trump  
 and drum,  
 And shaped in squadron-strophes their  
 desire,  
 Live battle-odes whose lines were steel  
 and fire :  
 Yet sometimes feathered words are  
 strong,  
 A gracious memory to buoy up and save  
 From Lethe's dreamless ooze, the com-  
 mon grave  
 Of the unventurous throng.

II.

To-day our Reverend Mother welcomes  
 back  
 Her wisest Scholars, those who under-  
 stood  
 The deeper teaching of her mystic tome,  
 And offered their fresh lives to make  
 it good :

No lore of Greece or Rome,  
 No science peddling with the names of  
 things,  
 Or reading stars to find inglorious fates,  
 Can lift our life with wings  
 Far from Death's idle gulf that for the  
 many waits,  
 And lengthen out our dates  
 With that clear fame whose memory sings  
 In manly hearts to come, and nerves  
 them and dilates :  
 Nor such thy teaching, Mother of us all !  
 Not such the trumpet-call  
 Of thy diviner mood,  
 That could thy sons entice  
 From happy homes and toils, the fruit-  
 ful nest

Of those half-virtues which the world  
 calls best,  
 Into War's tumult rude ;  
 But rather far that stern device  
 The sponsors chose that round thy cradle  
 stood

In the dim, unventured wood,  
 The VERITAS that lurks beneath  
 The letter's unprolific sheath,  
 Life of whate'er makes life worth  
 living,  
 Seed-grain of high emprise, immortal  
 food,  
 One heavenly thing whereof earth hath  
 the giving.

III.

Many loved Truth, and lavished life's  
 best oil  
 Amid the dust of books to find her,  
 Content at last, for guerdon of their toil,  
 With the cast mantle she hath left  
 behind her.  
 Many in sad faith sought for her,  
 Many with crossed hands sighed for  
 her ;  
 But these, our brothers, fought for  
 her  
 At life's dear peril wrought for her,  
 So loved her that they died for her,  
 Tasting the raptured fleetness  
 Of her divine completeness :  
 Their higher instinct knew  
 Those love her best who to themselves  
 are true,  
 And what they dare to dream of, dare to  
 do ;  
 They followed her and found her  
 Where all may hope to find,



Not in the ashes of the burnt-out mind,  
But beautiful, with danger's sweetness  
    round her.

Where faith made whole with deed  
Breathes its awakening breath  
Into the lifeless creed,  
They saw her plumed and mailed,  
With sweet, stern face unveiled,  
And all-repaying eyes, look proud on  
    them in death.

IV.

Our slender life runs rippling by, and  
    glides

Into the silent hollow of the past;  
    What is there that abides

To make the next age better for the  
    last?

Is earth too poor to give us  
Something to live for here that shall  
    outlive us?

Some more substantial boon  
Thau such as flows and ebbs with For-  
    tune's fickle moon?

The little that we see  
From doubt is never free;

The little that we do  
Is but half-nobly being;

With our laborious hiving

What men call treasure, and the gods  
    call dross,

Life seems a jest of Fate's contriving,  
Only secure in every one's conniving,  
A long account of nothings paid with  
    loss,

Where we poor puppets, jerked by un-  
    seen wires,

After our little hour of strut and rave,  
With all our pasteboard passions and  
    desires,

Loves, hates, ambitions, and immortal  
    fires,

Are tossed pell-mell together in the  
    grave.

But stay! no age was e'er degenerate,  
Unless men held it at too cheap a rate,  
For in our likeness still we shape our  
    fate.

Ah, there is something here  
Unfathomed by the cynic's sneer,  
Something that gives our feeble light  
A high immunity from Night,  
Something that leaps life's narrow bars

To claim its birthright with the hosts of  
    heaven;

A seed of sunshine that can leaven

Our earthy dulness with the beams of  
    stars,

And glorify our clay

With light from fountains elder than  
    the Day;

A conscience more divine than we,  
A gladness fed with secret tears,

A vexing, forward-reaching sense  
Of some more noble permanence;

A light across the sea,

Which haunts the soul and will not  
    let it be,

Still beaconing from the heights of un-  
    degenerate years.

V.

Whither leads the path

To ampler fates that leads?

Not down through flowery  
    meads,

To reap an aftermath

Of youth's vainglorious weeds,  
But up the steep, amid the wrath

And shock of deadly-hostile creeds,  
Where the world's best hope and

stay

By battle's flashes gropes a desperate  
    way,

And every turf the fierce foot clings to  
    bleeds.

Peace hath her not ignoble wreath,  
Ere yet the sharp, decisive word

Light the black lips of cannon, and the  
    sword

Dreams in its easeful sheath;

But some day the live coal behind the  
    thought,

Whether from Baäl's stone ob-  
    scene,

Or from the shrine serene

Of God's pure altar brought,

Bursts up in flame; the war of tongue  
    and pen

Learns with what deadly purpose it was  
    fraught,

And, helpless in the fiery passion caught,  
Shakes all the pillared state with shock

of men:

Some day the soft Ideal that we wooed  
Confronts us fiercely, foe-beset, pursued,

And cries reproachful: "Was it, then,  
    my praise,

And not myself was loved? Prove now  
    thy truth;

I claim of thee the promise of thy youth;

Give me thy life, or cower in empty  
 phrase,  
 The victim of thy genius, not its  
 mate!"

Life may be given in many ways,  
 And loyalty to Truth be sealed  
 As bravely in the closet as the field,  
 So bountiful is Fate ;  
 But then to stand beside her,  
 When craven churls deride her,  
 To front a lie in arms and not to  
 yield,

This shows, methinks, God's plan  
 And measure of a stalwart man,  
 Limbed like the old heroic breeds,  
 Who stands self-poised on man-  
 hood's solid earth,  
 Not forced to frame excuses for his  
 birth,  
 Fed from within with all the strength he  
 needs.

## VI.

Such was he, our Martyr-Chief,  
 Whom late the Nation he had led,  
 With ashes on her head,  
 Wept with the passion of an angry grief :  
 Forgive me, if from present things I  
 turn

To speak what in my heart will beat and  
 burn,  
 And hang my wreath on his world-hon-  
 ored urn.

Nature, they say, doth dote,  
 And cannot make a man  
 Save on some worn-out plan,  
 Repeating us by rote :

For him her Old-World moulds aside she  
 threw,

And, choosing sweet clay from the  
 breast

Of the unexhausted West,  
 With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,  
 Wise, steadfast in the strength of God,  
 and true.

How beautiful to see  
 Once more a shepherd of mankind in-  
 deed,

Who loved his charge, but never loved  
 to lead ;

One whose meek flock the people joyed  
 to be,

Not lured by any cheat of birth,  
 But by his clear-grained human  
 worth,

And brave old wisdom of sincerity !

They knew that outward grace is  
 dust ;

They could not choose but trust  
 In that sure-footed mind's unflinching  
 skill,

And supple-tempered will  
 That bent like perfect steel to spring  
 again and thrust.

His was no lonely mountain-peak  
 of mind,

Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudy  
 bars,

A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors  
 blind ;

Broad prairie rather, genial, level-  
 lined,

Fruitful and friendly for all human  
 kind,

Yet also nigh to heaven and loved of  
 loftiest stars.

Nothing of Europe here,  
 Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward  
 still,

Ere any names of Serf and Peer  
 Could Nature's equal scheme de-  
 face

And thwart her genial will ;  
 Here was a type of the true elder  
 race,

And one of Plutarch's men talked with  
 us face to face.

I praise him not ; it were too late ;  
 And some innate weakness there must  
 be

In him who condescends to victory  
 Such as the Present gives, and cannot  
 wait,

Safe in himself as in a fate.  
 So always firmly he :

He knew to bide his time,  
 And can his fame abide,

Still patient in his simple faith sub-  
 lime,

Till the wise years decide.  
 Great captains, with their guns and  
 drums,

Disturb our judgment for the hour,  
 But at last silence comes ;

These all are gone, and, standing like  
 a tower,

Our children shall behold his fame,  
 The kindly-earnest, brave, foresee-  
 ing man,

Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not  
 blame,

New birth of our new soil, the first  
 American.

VII.

Long as man's hope insatiate can discern  
 Or only guess some more inspiring goal  
 Outside of Self, enduring as the pole,  
 Along whose course the flying axles burn  
 Of spirits bravely-pitched, earth's manlier brood ;  
 Long as below we cannot find  
 The meed that stills the inexorable mind ;  
 So long this faith to some ideal Good,  
 Under whatever mortal names it masks,  
 Freedom, Law, Country, this ethereal mood  
 That thanks the Fates for their severer tasks,  
 Feeling its challenged pulses leap,  
 While others skulk in subterfuges cheap,  
 And, set in Danger's van, has all the boon it asks,  
 Shall win man's praise and woman's love,  
 Shall be a wisdom that we set above  
 All other skills and gifts to culture dear,  
 A virtue round whose forehead we inwreath  
 Laurels that with a living passion breathe  
 When other crowns grow, while we twine them, sear.  
 What brings us thronging these high rites to pay,  
 And seal these hours the noblest of our year,  
 Save that our brothers found this better way ?

VIII.

We sit here in the Promised Land  
 That flows with Freedom's honey and milk ;  
 But 't was they won it, sword in hand,  
 Making the nettle danger soft for us as silk.  
 We welcome back our bravest and our best ; —  
 Ah me ! not all ! some come not with the rest,  
 Who went forth brave and bright as any here !

I strive to mix some gladness with my strain,  
 But the sad strings complain,  
 And will not please the ear :  
 I sweep them for a pean, but they wane  
 Again and yet again  
 Into a dirge, and die away, in pain.  
 In these brave ranks I only see the gaps,  
 Thinking of dear ones whom the dumb turf wraps,  
 Dark to the triumph which they died to gain :  
 Fittier may others greet the living,  
 For me the past is unforgiving ;  
 I with uncovered head  
 Salute the sacred dead,  
 Who went, and who return not. — Say not so !  
 'T is not the grapes of Canaan that repay,  
 But the high faith that failed not by the way ;  
 Virtue treads paths that end not in the grave ;  
 No ban of endless night exiles the brave ;  
 And to the saner mind  
 We rather seem the dead that stayed behind.  
 Blow, trumpets, all your exultations blow !  
 For never shall their aureoled presence lack :  
 I see them muster in a gleaming row,  
 With ever-youthful brows that nobler show ;  
 We find in our dull road their shining track ;  
 In every nobler mood  
 We feel the orient of their spirit glow,  
 Part of our life's unalterable good,  
 Of all our saintlier aspiration ;  
 They come transfigured back,  
 Secure from change in their high-hearted ways,  
 Beautiful evermore, and with the rays  
 Of morn on their white Shields of Expectation !

IX.

But is there hope to save  
 Even this ethereal essence from the grave ?  
 What ever 'scaped Oblivion's subtle wrong  
 Save a few clarion names, or golden threads of song !  
 Before my musing eye



The mighty ones of old sweep by,  
 Disvoic'd now and insubstantial  
 things,  
 As noisy once as we; poor ghosts of  
 kings,  
 Shadows of empire wholly gone to  
 dust,  
 And many races, nameless long ago,  
 To darkness driven by that imperious  
 gust  
 Of ever-rushing Time that here doth  
 blow :  
 O visionary world, condition strange,  
 Where naught abiding is but only  
 Change,  
 Where the deep-bolted stars themselves  
 still shift and range !  
 Shall we to more continuance make  
 pretence ?  
 Renown builds tombs ; a life-estate is  
 Wit ;  
 And, bit by bit,  
 The cunning years steal all from us but  
 woe ;  
 Leaves are we, whose decays no har-  
 vest sow.  
 But, when we vanish hence,  
 Shall they lie forceless in the dark  
 below,  
 Save to make green their little length  
 of sods,  
 Or deepen pansies for a year or two,  
 Who now to us are shining-sweet as  
 gods ?  
 Was dying all they had the skill to do ?  
 That were not fruitless : but the Soul  
 resents  
 Such short-lived service, as if blind  
 events  
 Ruled without her, or earth could so  
 endure ;  
 She claims a more divine investiture  
 Of longer tenure than Fame's airy  
 rents ;  
 Whate'er she touches doth her nature  
 share ;  
 Her inspiration haunts the ennobled  
 air,  
 Gives eyes to mountains blind,  
 Ears to the deaf earth, voices to the  
 wind,  
 And her clear trump sings succor  
 everywhere  
 By lonely bivouacs to the wakeful  
 mind ;  
 [For soul inherits all that soul could  
 dare :

Yea, Manhood hath a wider span  
 And larger privilege of life than man.  
 The single deed, the private sacrifice,  
 So radiant now through proudly-hid-  
 den tears,  
 Is covered up ere long from mortal eyes  
 With thoughtless drift of the decidu-  
 ous years ;  
 But that high privilege that makes all  
 men peers,  
 That leap of heart whereby a people  
 rise  
 Up to a noble anger's height,  
 And, flamed on by the Fates, not shrink,  
 but grow more bright,  
 That swift validity in noble veins,  
 Of choosing danger and disdaining  
 shame,  
 Of being set on flame  
 By the pure fire that flies all contact  
 base,  
 But wraps its chosen with angelic might,  
 These are imperishable gains,  
 Sure as the sun, medicinal as light,  
 These hold great futures in their lusty  
 reins  
 And certify to earth a new imperial race.

## x.

Who now shall sneer ?  
 Who dare again to say we trace  
 Our lines to a plebeian race ?  
 Roundhead and Cavalier !  
 Dumb are those names erewhile in battle  
 loud ;  
 Dream-footed as the shadow of a cloud,  
 They flit across the ear :  
 That is best blood that hath most iron  
 in 't.  
 To edge resolve with, pouring without  
 stint  
 For what makes manhood dear.  
 Tell us not of Plantagenets,  
 Hapsburgs, and Guelfs, whose thin bloods  
 crawl  
 Down from some victor in a border-  
 brawl !  
 How poor their outworn coronets,  
 Matched with one leaf of that plain civic  
 wreath  
 Our brave for honor's blazon shall be-  
 queath,  
 Through whose desert a rescued Nation  
 sets  
 Her heel on treason, and the trumpet  
 hears

Shout victory, tingling Europe's sullen  
ears  
With vain resentments and more vain  
regrets!

XI.

Not in anger, not in pride,  
Purc from passion's mixture rude  
Ever to base earth allied,  
But with far-heard gratitude,  
Still with heart and voicerenewed,  
To heroes living and dear martyrs  
dead,  
The strain should close that consecrates  
our brave.  
Lift the heart and lift the head!  
Lofty be its mood and grave,  
Not without a martial ring,  
Not without a prouder tread  
And a peal of exultation:  
Little right has he to sing  
Through whose heart in such an  
hour  
Beats no march of conscious  
power,  
Sweeps no tumult of elation!  
'T is no Man we celebrate,  
By his country's victories great,  
A hero half, and half the whim of  
Fate,  
But the pith and marrow of a  
Nation  
Drawing force from all her men,  
Highest, humblest, weakest, all,  
For her time of need, and then  
Pulsing it again through them,  
Till the basest can no longer cower,  
Feeling his soul spring up divinely tall,  
Touched but in passing by her mantle-  
hem.  
Come back, then, noble pride, for 't is  
her dower!  
How could poet ever tower,  
If his passions, hopes, and fears,  
If his triumphs and his tears,  
Kept not measure with his peo-  
ple?  
Boom, cannon, boom to all the winds  
and waves!  
Clash out, glad bells, from every rock-  
ing steeple!  
Banners, adance with triumph, bend  
your staves!  
And from every mountain-peak  
Let beacon-fire to answering beacon  
speak,

Katahdin tell Monadnock, White-  
face he,  
And so leap on in light from sea to sea,  
Till the glad news be sent  
Across a kindling continent,  
Making earth feel more firm and air  
breathe braver:  
"Be proud! for she is saved, and all  
have helped to save her!  
She that lifts up the manhood of  
the poor,  
She of the open soul and open door,  
With room about her hearth for all  
mankind!  
The fire is dreadful in her eyes no  
more;  
From her bold front the helm she  
doth unbind,  
Sends all her handmaid armies back  
to spin,  
And bids her navies, that so lately  
hurled  
Their crashing battle, hold their  
thunders in,  
Swimming like birds of calm along  
the unharmed shore.  
No challenge sends she to the elder  
world,  
That looked askance and hated; a  
light scorn  
Plays o'er her mouth, as round her  
mighty knees  
She calls her children back, and  
waits the morn  
Of nobler day, enthroned between her  
subject seas."

XII.

Bow down, dear Land, for thou hast  
found release!  
Thy God, in these distempered days,  
Hath taught thee the sure wisdom of  
His ways,  
And through thine enemies hath wrought  
thy peace!  
Bow down in prayer and praise!  
No poorest in thy borders but may now  
Lift to the juster skies a man's enfran-  
chised brow.  
O Beautiful! my Country! ours once  
more!  
Smoothing thy gold of war-dishevelled  
hair  
O'er such sweet brows as never other  
wore,  
And letting thy set lips,

Freed from wrath's pale eclipse,  
 The rosy edges of their smile lay bare,  
 What words divine of lover or of poet  
 Could tell our love and make thee know  
 it,  
 Among the Nations bright beyond com-  
 pare?

What were our lives without  
 thee?  
 What all our lives to save thee?  
 We reckon not what we gave thee;  
 We will not dare to doubt thee,  
 But ask whatever else, and we will  
 dare!

## L'ENVOI.

## TO THE MUSE.

WHITHER? Albeit I follow fast,  
 In all life's circuit I but find,  
 Not where thou art, but where thou  
 wast,

Sweet beckoner, more fleet than wind!  
 I haunt the pine-dark solitudes,

With soft brown silence carpeted,  
 And plot to snare thee in the woods:

Peace I o'ertake, but thou art fled!

I find the rock where thou didst rest,  
 The moss thy skimming foot hath prest;

All Nature with thy parting thrills,  
 Like branches after birds new-flown;

Thy passage hill and hollow fills  
 With hints of virtue not their own;

In dimples still the water slips  
 Where thou hast dipt thy finger-tips;

Just, just beyond, forever burn  
 Gleams of a grace without return;

Upon thy shade I plant my foot,  
 And through my frame strange raptures  
 shoot;

All of thee but thyself I grasp;

I seem to fold thy luring shape,  
 And vague air to my bosom clasp,

Thou lithe, perpetual Escape!

One mask and then another drops,

And thou art secret as before:

Sometimes with flooded ear I list,  
 And hear thee, wondrous organist,

From mighty continental stops

A thunder of new music pour;

Through pipes of earth and air and stone  
 Thy inspiration deep is blown;

Through mountains, forests, open downs,  
 Lakes, railroads, prairies, states, and  
 towns,

Thy gathering fugue goes rolling on  
 From Maine to utmost Oregon;  
 The factory-wheels in cadence hum,  
 From brawling parties concords come;

All this I hear, or seem to hear,  
 But when, enchanted, I draw near

To mate with words the various theme,  
 Life seems a whiff of kitchen steam,

History an organ-grinder's thrum,

For thou hast slipt from it and me

And all thine organ-pipes left dumb,  
 Most mutable Perversity!

Not weary yet, I still must seek,  
 And hope for luck next day, next week;

I go to see the great man ride,  
 Shiplike, the swelling human tide

That floods to bear him into port,  
 Trophied from Senate-hall and Court;

Thy magnetism, I feel it there,  
 Thy rhythmic presence fleet and rare,

Making the Mob a moment fine  
 With glimpses of their own Divine,

As in their demigod they see

Their cramped ideal soaring free;

'T was thou didst bear the fire about,

That, like the springing of a mine  
 Sent up to heaven the street-long shout;

Full well I know that thou wast here,

It was thy breath that brushed my ear;

But vainly in the stress and whirl

I dive for thee, the moment's pearl.

Through every shape thou well canst  
 run,

Proteus, 'twixt rise and set of sun,

Well pleased with logger-camps in  
 Maine



As where Milan's pale Duomo lies  
 A stranded glacier on the plain,  
 Its peaks and pinnacles of ice  
 Melted in many a quaint device,  
 And sees, above the city's din,  
 Afar its silent Alpine kin :  
 I track thee over carpets deep  
 To wealth's and beauty's inmost keep ;  
 Across the sand of bar-room floors  
 Mid the stale reek of boosing boors ;  
 Where drowse the hay-field's fragrant  
 heats,  
 Or the flail-heart of Autumn beats ;  
 I dog thee through the market's throngs  
 To where the sea with myriad tongues  
 Laps the green edges of the pier,  
 And the tall ships that eastward steer,  
 Curtsy their farewells to the town,  
 O'er the curved distance lessening down ;  
 I follow allwhere for thy sake.  
 Touch thy robe's hem, but ne'er o'ertake,  
 Find where, scarce yet unmoving, lies,  
 Warm from thy limbs, thy last disguise ;  
 But thou another shape hast donned,  
 And lurest still just, just beyond !

But here a voice, I know not whence,  
 Thrills clearly through my inward sense,  
 Saying : " See where she sits at home  
 While thou in search of her dost roam !  
 All summer long her ancient wheel  
 Whirls humming by the open door,  
 Or, when the hickory's social zeal  
 Sets the wide chimney in a roar,  
 Close-nestled by the tinkling hearth,  
 It modulates the household mirth  
 With that sweet serious undertone  
 Of duty, music all her own ;  
 Still as of old she sits and spins  
 Our hopes, our sorrows, and our sins ;  
 With equal care she twines the fates  
 Of cottages and mighty states ;  
 She spins the earth, the air, the sea,  
 The maiden's unschooled fancy free,

The boy's first love, the man's first grief,  
 The budding and the fall o' the leaf ;  
 The piping west-wind's snowy care  
 For her their cloudy fleeces spare,  
 Or from the thorns of evil times  
 She can glean wool to twist her rhymes ;  
 Morning and noon and eve supply  
 To her their fairest tints for dye,  
 But ever through her twirling thread  
 There spires one line of warmest red,  
 Tinged from the homestead's genial  
 heart,  
 The stamp and warrant of her art ;  
 With this Time's sickle she outwears,  
 And blunts the Sisters' baffled shears.

" Harass her not : thy heat and stir  
 But greater coyness breed in her ;  
 Yet thou mayst find, ere Age's frost,  
 Thy long apprenticeship not lost,  
 Learning at last that Stygian Fate  
 Unbends to him that knows to wait.  
 The Muse is womanish, nor deigns  
 Her love to him that pules and plains ;  
 With proud, averted face she stands  
 To him that woos with empty hands.  
 Make thyself free of Manhood's guild ;  
 Pull down thy barns and greater build ;  
 The wood, the mountain, and the plain  
 Wave breast-deep with the poet's grain ;  
 Pluck thou the sunset's fruit of gold,  
 Glean from the heavens and ocean old ;  
 From fireside lone and trampling street  
 Let thy life garner daily wheat ;  
 The epic of a man rehearse,  
 Be something better than thy verse ;  
 Make thyself rich, and then the Muse  
 Shall court thy precious interviews,  
 Shall take thy head upon her knee,  
 And such enchantment lilt to thee,  
 That thou shalt hear the life-blood flow  
 From farthest stars to grass-blades low,  
 And find the Listener's science still  
 Transcends the Singer's deepest skill !"

To  
MR. JAMES T. FIELDS.

—◆—  
MY DEAR FIELDS:

Dr. Johnson's sturdy self-respect led him to invent the Bookseller as a substitute for the Patron. My relations with you have enabled me to discover how pleasantly the Friend may replace the Bookseller. Let me record my sense of many thoughtful services by associating your name with a poem which owes its appearance in this form to your partiality.

Cordially yours,

J. R. LOWELL.

CAMBRIDGE, *November 29, 1869.*

## THE CATHEDRAL.

FAR through the memory shines a happy  
day,  
Cloudless of care, down-shod to every  
sense,

And simply perfect from its own resource,  
As to a bee the new campanula's  
Illuminate seclusion swung in air.  
Such days are not the prey of setting  
suns,

Nor ever blurred with mist of after-  
thought;

Like words made magical by poets dead,  
Wherein the music of all meaning is  
The sense hath garnered or the soul di-  
vined,

They mingle with our life's ethereal part,  
Sweetening and gathering sweetness ever-  
more,

By beauty's franchise disenthralled of  
time.

I can recall, nay, they are present still,  
Parts of myself, the perfume of my mind,  
Days that seem farther off than Homer's  
now

Ere yet the child had loudened to the boy,  
And I, recluse from playmates, found  
perforce

Companionship in things that not denied  
Nor granted wholly; as is Nature's  
wont,

Who, safe in uncontaminate reserve,  
Lets us mistake our longing for her love,  
And mocks with various echo of our-  
selves.

These first sweet frauds upon our con-  
sciousness,

That blend the sensual with its imaged  
world,

These virginal cognitions, gifts of morn,  
Ere life grow noisy, and slower-footed  
thought

Can overtake the rapture of the sense,  
To thrust between ourselves and what  
we feel,

Have something in them secretly divine.  
Vainly the eye, once schooled to serve  
the brain,

With pains deliberate studies to renew  
The ideal vision: second-thoughts are  
prose;

For beauty's acme hath a term as brief  
As the wave's poise before it break in  
pearl.

Our own breath dims the mirror of the  
sense,

Looking too long and closely: at a flash  
We snatch the essential grace of mean-  
ing out,

And that first passion beggars all be-  
hind,

Heirs of a tamer transport prepossessed.  
Who, seeing once, has truly seen again  
The gray vague of unsympathizing sea  
That dragged his Fancy from her moor-  
ings back

To shores inhospitable of eldest time,  
Till blank foreboding of earth-generated  
powers,

Pitiless seignories in the elements,  
Omnipotences blind that darkling smite,  
Mishgave him, and repaganized the  
world?

Yet, by some subtler touch of sympathy,  
These primal apprehensions, dimly  
stirred,

Perplex the eye with pictures from with-  
in.

This hath made poets dream of lives fore-  
gone

In worlds fantastical, more fair than ours;  
So Memory cheats us, glimpsing half-  
revealed.

Even as I write she tries her wonted  
spell



In that continuous redbreast boding  
rain :  
The bird I hear sings not from yonder  
elm ;  
But the flown ecstasy my childhood  
heard  
Is vocal in my mind, renewed by him,  
Haply made sweeter by the accumulate  
thrill  
That threads my undivided life and  
steals  
A pathos from the years and graves be-  
tween.

I know not how it is with other men,  
Whom I but guess, deciphering myself ;  
For me, once felt is so felt nevermore.  
The fleeting relish at sensation's brim  
Had in it the best ferment of the wine.  
One spring I knew as never any since :  
All night the surges of the warm south-  
west  
Boomed intermittent through the wal-  
lowing elms,  
And brought a morning from the Gulf  
adrift,  
Omnipotent with sunshine, whose quick  
charm  
Startled with crocuses the sullen turf  
And wiled the bluebird to his whiff of  
song :  
One summer hour abides, what time I  
perched,  
Dappled with noonday, under simmer-  
ing leaves,  
And pulled the pulpy oxhearts, while  
aloof  
An oriole clattered and the robins  
shrilled,  
Denouncing me an alien and a thief :  
One morn of autumn lords it o'er the  
rest,  
When in the lane I watched the ash-  
leaves fall,  
Balancing softly earthward without  
wind,  
Or twirling with directer impulse down  
On those fallen yesterday, now barbed  
with frost,  
While I grew pensive with the pensive  
year :  
And once I learned how marvellous  
winter was,  
When past the fence-rails, downy-gray  
with rime,  
I creaked adventurous o'er the spangled  
crust

That made familiar fields seem far and  
strange  
As those stark wastes that whiten end-  
lessly  
In ghastly solitude about the pole,  
And gleam relentless to the unsetting  
sun :  
Instant the candid chambers of my brain  
Were painted with these sovran images ;  
And later visions seem but copies pale  
From those unfading frescos of the past,  
Which I, young savage, in my age of  
flint,  
Gazed at, and dimly felt a power in me  
Parted from Nature by the joy in her  
That doubtfully revealed me to myself.  
Thenceforward I must stand outside the  
gate ;  
And paradise was paradise the more,  
Known once and barred against satiety.

What we call Nature, all outside our-  
selves,  
Is but our own conceit of what we see,  
Our own reaction upon what we feel ;  
The world's a woman to our shifting  
mood,  
Feeling with us, or making due pretence ;  
And therefore we the more persuade our-  
selves  
To make all things our thought's con-  
federates,  
Conniving with us in whate'er we dream.  
So when our Fancy seeks analogies,  
Though she have hidden what she after  
finds,  
She loves to cheat herself with feigned  
surprise.  
I find my own complexion everywhere :  
No rose, I doubt, was ever, like the  
first,  
A marvel to the bush it dawned upon,  
The rapture of its life made visible,  
The mystery of its yearning realized,  
As the first babe to the first woman  
born ;  
No falcon ever felt delight of wings  
As when, an eyas, from the stolid cliff  
Loosing himself, he followed his high  
heart  
To swim on sunshine, masterless as  
wind ;  
And I believe the brown earth takes  
delight  
In the new snowdrop looking back at  
her,  
To think that by some vernal alchemy

It could transmute her darkness into  
 pearl ;  
 What is the buxom peony after that,  
 With its coarse constancy of hoyden  
 blush ?  
 What the full summer to that wonder  
 new ?

But, if in nothing else, in us there is  
 A sense fastidious hardly reconciled  
 To the poor makeshifts of life's scenery,  
 Where the same slide must double all its  
 parts,  
 Shoved in for Tarsus and hitched back  
 for Tyre.

I blame not in the soul this daintiness,  
 Rasher of surfeit than a humming-bird,  
 In things indifferent by sense purveyed ;  
 It argues her an immortality  
 And dateless incomes of experience,  
 This unthrif housekeeping that will not  
 brook

A dish warmed-over at the feast of life,  
 And finds Twice stale, served with what-  
 ever sauce.

Nor matters much how it may go with  
 me

Who dwell in Grub Street and am proud  
 to drudge

Where men, my betters, wet their crust  
 with tears :

Use can make sweet the peach's shady  
 side,

That only by reflection tastes of sun.

But she, my Princess, who will some-  
 times deign

My garret to illumine till the walls,  
 Narrow and dingy, scrawled with hack-  
 neyed thought

(Poor Richard slowly elbowing Plato  
 out),

Dilate and drape themselves with tapes-  
 tries

Nausikaa might have stooped o'er, while,  
 between,

Mirrors, effaced in their own clearness,  
 send

• Her only image on through deepening  
 deeps

With endless repercussion of delight, —  
 Bringer of life, witching each sense to  
 soul,

That sometimes almost gives me to  
 believe

I might have been a poet, gives at least  
 A brain desaxonized, an ear that makes

Music where none is, and a keener pang  
 Of exquisite surmise outleaping  
 thought, —

Her will I pamper in her luxury :  
 No crumpled rose-leaf of too careless  
 choice

Shall bring a northern nightmare to her  
 dreams,

Vexing with sense of exile ; hers shall  
 be

The invitiating firstlings of experience,  
 Vibrations felt but once and felt life-  
 long :

O, more than half-way turn that Grecian  
 front

Upon me, while with self-rebuke I spell,  
 On the plain fillet that confines thy hair  
 In conscious bounds of seeming uncon-  
 straint,

The *Naught in overplus*, thy race's  
 badge!

One feast for her I secretly designed  
 In that Old World so strangely beautiful  
 To us the disinherited of eld, —

A day at Chartres, with no soul beside  
 To roil with pedant prate my joy serene  
 And make the minster shy of confidence.

I went, and, with the Saxon's pious care,  
 First ordered dinner at the pea-green  
 inn,

The flies and I its only customers.  
 Eluding these, I loitered through the  
 town,

With hope to take my minster unawares  
 In its grave solitude of memory.

A pretty burgh, and such as Fancy loves  
 For bygone grandeurs, faintly rumored  
 now

Upon the mind's horizon, as of storm  
 Brooding its dreamy thunders far aloof,  
 That mingle with our mood, but not  
 disturb.

Its once grim bulwarks, tamed to lovers'  
 walks,

Look down unwatchful on the sliding  
 Eure,

Whose listless leisure suits the quiet  
 place,

Lisp among his shallows homelike  
 sounds

At Concord and by Bankside heard be-  
 fore.

Chance led me to a public pleasure-  
 ground,

Where I grew kindly with the merry  
 groups,

And blessed the Frenchman for his simple art  
 Of being domestic in the light of day.  
 His language has no word, we growl, for Home ;  
 But he can find a fireside in the sun,  
 Play with his child, make love, and shriek his mind,  
 By throngs of strangers undisprivacied.  
 He makes his life a public gallery,  
 Nor feels himself till what he feels comes back  
 In manifold reflection from without ;  
 While we, each pore alert with consciousness,  
 Hide our best selves as we had stolen them,  
 And each bystander a detective were,  
 Keen-eyed for every chink of undisguise.

So, musing o'er the problem which was best, —

A life wide-windowed, shining all abroad,  
 Or curtains drawn to shield from sight profane

The rites we pay to the mysterious I, —  
 With outward senses furloughed and head bowed

I followed some fine instinct in my feet,  
 Till, to unbend me from the loom of thought,

Looking up suddenly, I found mine eyes  
 Confronted with the minster's vast repose.

Silent and gray as forest-leaguered cliff  
 Left inland by the ocean's slow retreat,  
 That hears afar the breeze-borne rote and longs,

Remembering shocks of surf that clomb and fell,

Spume-sliding down the baffled decuman,  
 It rose before me, patiently remote

From the great tides of life it breasted once,

Hearing the noise of men as in a dream.  
 I stood before the triple northern port,  
 Where dedicated shapes of saints and kings,

Stern faces bleared with immemorial wath,

Looked down benignly grave and seemed to say,

*Ye come and go incessant ; we remain  
 Safe in the hallowed quiets of the past ;  
 Be reverent, ye who fit and are forgot,  
 Of faith so nobly realized as this.*

I seem to have heard it said by learnöd folk

Who drench you with æsthetics till you feel

As if all beauty were a ghastly bore,  
 The faucet to let loose a wash of words,  
 That Gothic is not Grecian, therefore worse ;

But, being convinced by much experiment

How little inventiveness there is in man,  
 Grave copier of copies, I give thanks  
 For a new relish, careless to inquire

My pleasure's pedigree, if so it please,  
 Nobly, I mean, nor renegade to art.  
 The Grecian gluts me with its perfectness,

Unanswerable as Euclid, self-contained,  
 The one thing finished in this hasty world,

Forever finished, though the barbarous pit,

Fanatical on hearsay, stamp and shout  
 As if a miracle could be encored.

But ah ! this other, this that never ends,  
 Still climbing, luring fancy still to climb,  
 As full of morals half-divined as life,  
 Graceful, grotesque, with ever new surprise

Of hazardous caprices sure to please,  
 Heavy as nightmare, airy-light as fern,  
 Imagination's very self in stone !

With one long sigh of infinite release  
 From pedantries past, present, or to come,

I looked, and owned myself a happy Goth.

Your blood is mine, ye architects of dream,

Builders of aspiration incomplete,  
 So more consummate, souls self-confident,

Who felt your own thought worthy of record

In monumental pomp ! No Grecian drop  
 Rebukes these veins that leap with kindred thrill,

After long exile, to the mother-tongue.

Ovid in Pontus, puling for his Rome  
 Of men invirile and disnattered dames  
 That poison sucked from the Attic bloom decayed,

Shrank with a shudder from the blue-eyed race

Whose force rough-handed should renew the world,



And from the dregs of Romulus express  
 Such wine as Dante poured, or he who  
 blew  
 Roland's vain blast, or sang the Cam-  
 peador  
 In verse that clanks like armor in the  
 charge,  
 Homeric juice, though brimmed in Odin's  
 horn.  
 And they could build, if not the col-  
 umned fane  
 That from the height gleamed seaward  
 many-hued,  
 Something more friendly with their  
 ruder skies :  
 The gray spire, molten now in driving  
 mist,  
 Now lulled with the incommunicable  
 blue ;  
 The carvings touched to meaning new  
 with snow,  
 Or commented with fleeting grace of  
 shade ;  
 The statues, motley as man's memory,  
 Partial as that, so mixed of true and  
 false,  
 History and legend meeting with a kiss  
 Across this bound-mark where their  
 realms confine ;  
 The painted windows, freaking gloom  
 with glow,  
 Dusking the sunshine which they seem  
 to cheer,  
 Meet symbol of the senses and the soul,  
 And the whole pile, grim with the  
 Northman's thought  
 Of life and death, and doom, life's equal  
 fee, —  
 These were before me : and I gazed  
 abashed,  
 Child of an age that lectures, not creates,  
 Plastering our swallow-nests on the aw-  
 ful Past,  
 And twittering round the work of larger  
 men,  
 As we had builded what we but deface.  
 Far up the great bells wallowed in de-  
 light,  
 Tossing their clangors o'er the heedless  
 town,  
 To call the worshippers who never came,  
 Or women mostly, in loath twos and  
 threes.  
 I entered, reverent of whatever shrine  
 Guards piety and solace for my kind  
 Or gives the soul a moment's truce of  
 God,

And shared decorous in the ancient rite  
 My sterner fathers held idolatrous.  
 The service over, I was tranced in  
 thought :  
 Solemn the deepening vaults, and most  
 to me,  
 Fresh from the fragile realm of deal and  
 paint,  
 Or brick mock-pious with a marble  
 front ;  
 Solemn the lift of high-embowered roof,  
 The clustered stems that spread in  
 boughs disleaved,  
 Through which the organ blew a dream  
 of storm,  
 Though not more potent to sublime  
 with awe  
 And shut the heart up in tranquillity,  
 Than aisles to me familiar that o'er-  
 arch  
 The conscious silences of brooding  
 woods,  
 Centurial shadows, cloisters of the elk :  
 Yet here was sense of undefined regret,  
 Irreparable loss, uncertain what :  
 Was all this grandeur but anachro-  
 nism, —  
 A shell divorced of its informing life,  
 Where the priest housed him like a  
 hermit-crab,  
 An alien to that faith of elder days  
 That gathered round it this fair shape  
 of stone ?  
 Is old Religion but a spectre now,  
 Haunting the solitude of darkened  
 minds,  
 Mocked out of memory by the sceptic  
 day ?  
 Is there no corner safe from peeping  
 Doubt,  
 Since Gutenberg made thought cosmop-  
 olite  
 And stretched electric threads from  
 mind to mind ?  
 Nay, did Faith build this wonder ? or  
 did Fear,  
 That makes a fetish and misnames it  
 God  
 (Blockish or metaphysic, matters not),  
 Contrive this coop to shut its tyrant in,  
 Appeased with playthings, that he might  
 not harm ?  
 I turned and saw a beldame on her  
 knees ;  
 With eyes astray, she told mechanic  
 beads

Before some shrine of saintly womanhood,

Bribed intercessor with the far-off Judge :  
Such my first thought, by kindlier soon rebuked,

Pleading for whatsoever touches life  
With upward impulse : be He nowhere else,

God is in all that liberates and lifts,  
In all that humbles, sweetens, and consoles :

Blesséd the natures shored on every side  
With landmarks of hereditary thought !  
Thrice happy they that wander not life-long

Beyond near succor of the household faith,

The guarded fold that shelters, not confines !

Their steps find patience in familiar paths,

Printed with hope by loved feet gone before

Of parent, child, or lover, glorified  
By simple magic of dividing Time.

My lids were moistened as the woman knelt,

And — was it will, or some vibration faint

Of sacred Nature, deeper than the will ! —

My heart occultly felt itself in hers,  
Through mutual intercession gently leagued.

Or was it not mere sympathy of brain ?

A sweetness intellectually conceived

In simpler creeds to me impossible ?

A juggle of that pity for ourselves

In others, which puts on such pretty masks

And snares self-love with bait of charity ?  
Something of all it might be, or of none :

Yet for a moment I was snatched away  
And had the evidence of things not seen ;

For one rapt moment ; then it all came back,

This age that blots out life with question-marks,

This nineteenth century with its knife and glass

That make thought physical, and thrust far off

The Heaven, so neighborly with man of old,

To voids sparse-sown with alienated stars.

'T is irrecoverable, that ancient faith,  
Homely and wholesome, suited to the time,

With rod or candy for child-minded men :

No theologic tube, with lens on lens  
Of sylogism transparent, brings it near, —

At best resolving some new nebula,  
Or blurring some fixed-star of hope to mist.

Science was Faith once ; Faith were Science now,

Would she but lay her bow and arrows by  
And arm her with the weapons of the time.

Nothing that keeps thought out is safe from thought.

For there's no virgin-fort but self-respect,

And Truth defensive hath lost hold on God.

Shall we treat Him as if He were a child  
That knew not His own purpose ? nor dare trust

The Rock of Ages to their chemic tests,  
Lest some day the all-sustaining base divine

Should fail from under us, dissolved in gas ?

The armed eye that with a glance discerns

In a dry blood-speck between ox and man,

Stares helpless at this miracle called life,  
This shaping potency behind the egg,

This circulation swift of deity,  
Where suns and systems inconspicuous float

As the poor blood-disks in our mortal veins.

Each age must worship its own thought of God,

More or less earthy, clarifying still  
With subsidence continuous of the dregs ;

Nor saint nor sage could fix immutably  
The fluent image of the unstable Best,

Still changing in their very hands that wrought :

To-day's eternal truth To-morrow proved  
Frail as frost-landscapes on a window-pane.

Meanwhile Thou smiledst, inaccessible,  
At Thought's own substance made a cage

for Thought,

And Truth locked fast with her own master-key ;

Nor didst Thou reck what image man  
might make

Of his own shadow on the flowing world ;  
The climbing instinct was enough for  
Thee.

Or wast Thou, then, an ebbing tide that  
left

Strewn with dead miracle those eldest  
shores,

For men to dry, and dryly lecture on,  
Thyself thenceforth incapable of flood ?  
Idle who hopes with prophets to be  
snatched

By virtue in their mantles left below ;  
Shall the soul live on other men's report,  
Herself a pleasing fable of herself ?

Man cannot be God's outlaw if he would,  
Nor so abscond him in the caves of  
sense

But Nature still shall search some crev-  
ice out

With messages of splendor from that  
Source

Which, dive he, soar he, baffles still and  
lures.

This life were brutish did we not some-  
times

Have intimation clear of wider scope,  
Hints of occasion infinite, to keep  
The soul alert with noble discontent  
And onward yearnings of unstilled de-  
sire ;

Fruitless, except we now and then di-  
vined

A mystery of Purpose, gleaming through  
The secular confusions of the world,  
Whose will we darkly accomplish, doing  
ours.

No man can think nor in himself per-  
ceive,

Sometimes at waking, in the street  
sometimes,

Or on the hillside, always unforewarned,  
A grace of being, finer than himself,  
That beckons and is gone, — a larger  
life

Upon his own impinging, with swift  
glimpse

Of spacious circles luminous with mind,  
To which the ethereal substance of his  
own

Seems but gross cloud to make that  
visible,

Touched to a sudden glory round the  
edge.

Who that hath known these visitations  
fleet

Would strive to make them trite and  
ritual ?

I, that still pray at morning and at eve,  
Loving those roots that feed us from the  
past,

And prizing more than Plato things I  
learned

At that best academe, a mother's knee,  
Thrice in my life perhaps have truly  
prayed,

Thrice, stirred below my conscious self,  
have felt

That perfect disenthralment which is  
God ;

Nor know I which to hold worst  
enemy, —

Him who on speculation's windy waste  
Would turn me loose, stript of the rai-  
ment warm

By Faith contrived against our naked-  
ness,

Or him who, cruel-kind, would fain  
obscure,

With painted saints and paraphrase of  
God,

The soul's east-window of divine sur-  
prise.

Where others worship I but look and  
long ;

For, though not recreant to my fathers'  
faith,

Its forms to me are weariness, and most  
That drony vacuum of compulsory  
prayer,

Still pumping phrases for the Ineffable,  
Though all the valves of memory gasp  
and wheeze.

Words that have drawn transcendent  
meanings up

From the best passion of all bygone  
time,

Steeped through with tears of triumph  
and remorse,

Sweet with all sainthood, cleansed in  
martyr-fires,

Can they, so consecrate and so inspired,  
By repetition wane to vexing wind ?

Alas ! we cannot draw habitual breath  
In the thin air of life's suprema heights,

We cannot make each meal a sacrament,  
Nor with our tailors be disbodied souls, —

We men, too conscious of earth's comedy,  
Who see two sides, with our posed selves  
debate,

And only for great stakes can be sub-  
lime !

Let us be thankful when, as I do here,



We can read Bethel on a pile of stones,  
And, seeing where God *has* been, trust  
in Him.

Brave Peter Fischer there in Nuremberg,  
Moulding Saint Sebald's miracles in  
bronze,  
Put saint and stander-by in that quaint  
garb

Familiar to him in his daily walk,  
Not doubting God could grant a miracle  
Then and in Nuremberg, if so He would ;  
But never artist for three hundred years  
Hath dared the contradiction ludicrous  
Of supernatural in modern clothes.  
Perhaps the deeper faith that is to come  
Will see God rather in the strenuous  
doubt,

Than in the creed held as an infant's  
hand  
Holds purposeless what is placed there-  
in.

Say it is drift, not progress, none the  
less,

With the old sextant of the fathers'  
creed,

We shape our courses by new-risen stars,  
And, still lip-loyal to what once was  
truth,

Smuggle new meanings under ancient  
names,

Unconscious perverts of the Jesuit, Time.  
Change is the mask that all Continuance  
wears

To keep us youngsters harmlessly  
amused ;

Meanwhile some ailing or more watchful  
child,

Sitting apart, sees the old eyes gleam  
out,

Stern, and yet soft with humorous pity  
too.

Whilere, men burnt men for a doubtful  
point,

As if the mind were quenchable with  
fire,

And Faith danced round them with her  
war-paint on,

Devotly savage as an Iroquois ;

Now Calvin and Servetus at one board  
Snuff in grave sympathy a milder roast,  
And o'er their claret settle Comte unread.

Fagot and stake were desperately sin-  
cere :

Our cooler martyrdoms are done in types ;

And flames that shine in controversial  
eyes

Burn out no brains but his who kindles  
them.

This is no age to get cathedrals built :  
Did God, then, wait for one in Bethle-  
hem ?

Worst is not yet : lo, where his coming  
looms,

Of Earth's anarchic children latest born,  
Democracy, a Titan who hath learned  
To laugh at Jove's old-fashioned thun-  
derbolts, —

Could he not also forge them, if he  
would ?

He, better skilled, with solvents merci-  
less,

Loosened in air and borne on every wind,  
Saps unperceived : the calm Olympian  
height

Of ancient order feels its bases yield,  
And pale gods glance for help to gods as  
pale.

What will be left of good or worshipful,  
Of spiritual secrets, mysteries,  
Of fair religion's guarded heritage,  
Heirlooms of soul, passed downward un-  
profaned

From eldest Ind ? This Western giant  
coarse,

Scorning refinements which he lacks  
himself,

Loves not nor heeds the ancestral hie-  
rarchies,

Each rank dependent on the next above  
In orderly gradation fixed as fate.

King by mere manhood, nor allowing  
aught

Of holier unction than the sweat of toil ;  
In his own strength sufficient ; called to  
solve,

On the rough edges of society,  
Problems long sacred to the choicer few,  
And improvise what elsewhere men re-  
ceive

As gifts of deity ; tough foundling reared  
Where every man's his own Melchise-  
dek,

How make him reverent of a King of  
kings ?

Or Judge self-made, executor of laws  
By him not first discussed and voted on ?  
For him no tree of knowledge is forbid,  
Or sweeter if forbid. How save the  
ark,

Or holy of holies, unprofaned a day  
From his unscrupulous curiosity

That handles everything as if to buy,  
Tossing aside what fabrics delicate  
Suit not the rough-and-tumble of his  
ways?

What hope for those fine-nerved humani-  
ties

That made earth gracious once with  
gentler arts,

Now the rude hands have caught the  
trick of thought

And claim an equal suffrage with the  
brain?

The born disciple of an elder time,  
(To me sufficient, friendlier than the  
new,)

Who in my blood feel motions of the  
Past,

I thank benignant nature most for  
this,—

A force of sympathy, or call it lack  
Of character firm-planted, loosing me  
From the pent chamber of habitual  
self

To dwell enlarged in alien modes of  
thought,

Haply distasteful, wholesomer for that,  
And through imagination to possess,  
As they were mine, the lives of other  
men.

This growth original of virgin soil,  
By fascination felt in opposites,  
Pleases and shocks, entices and per-  
turbs.

In this brown-fisted rough, this shirt-  
sleeved Cid,

This backwoods Charlemagne of empires  
new,

Whose blundering heel instinctively  
finds out

The goutier foot of speechless dignities,  
Who, meeting Cæsar's self, would slap  
his back,

Call him "Old Horse," and challenge to  
a drink,

My lungs draw braver air, my breast  
dilates

With ampler manhood, and I front both  
worlds,

Of sense and spirit, as my natural fiefs,  
To shape and then reshape them as I  
will.

It was the first man's charter; why not  
mine?

How forfeit? when deposed in other  
hands?

Thou shudder'st, Ovid? Dost in him  
forebode

A new avatar of the large-limbed Goth,  
To break, or seem to break, tradition's  
clew,

And chase to dreamland back thy gods  
dethroned?

I think man's soul dwells nearer to the  
east,

Nearer to morning's fountains than the  
sun;

Herself the source whence all tradition  
sprang,

Herself at once both labyrinth and clew.  
The miracle fades out of history,

But faith and wonder and the primal  
earth

Are born into the world with every child.  
Shall this self-maker with the prying  
eyes,

This creature disenchanted of respect  
By the New World's new fiend, Publicity,  
Whose testing thumb leaves everywhere  
its smutch,

Not one day feel within himself the need  
Of loyalty to better than himself,

That shall ennoble him with the upward  
look?

Shall he not catch the Voice that wan-  
ders earth,

With spiritual summons, dreamed or  
heard,

As sometimes, just ere sleep seals up the  
sense,

We hear our mother call from deeps of  
Time,

And, waking, find it vision, — none the  
less

The benediction bides, old skies return,  
And that unreal thing, pre-eminent,

Makes air and dream of all we see and  
feel?

Shall he divine no strength unmade of  
votes,

Inward, impregnable, found soon as  
sought,

Not cognizable of sense, o'er sense su-  
preme?

Else were he desolate as none before,  
His holy places may not be of stone,

Nor made with hands, yet fairer far than  
aught

By artist feigned or pious ardor reared,  
Fit altars for who guards inviolate

God's chosen seat, the sacred form of  
man.

Doubtless his church will be no hospital  
For superannuate forms and mumping  
shams,

No parlor where men issue policies  
Of life-assurance on the Eternal Mind,  
Nor his religion but an ambulance  
To fetch life's wounded and malingering-  
ers in,

Scorned by the strong; yet he, uncon-  
scious heir

To the influence sweet of Athens and of  
Rome,

And old Judæa's gift of secret fire,  
Spite of himself shall surely learn to  
know

And worship some ideal of himself,  
Some divine thing, large-hearted, brother-  
ly,

Not nice in trifles, a soft creditor,  
Pleased with his world, and hating only  
cant.

And, if his Church be doubtful, it is  
sure

That, in a world, made for whatever else,  
Not made for mere enjoyment, in a  
world

Of toil but half-requited, or, at best,  
Paid in some futile currency of breath,  
A world of incompleteness, sorrow swift  
And consolation laggard, whatsoe'er  
The form of building or the creed pro-  
fessed,

The Cross, bold type of shame to hom-  
age turned,

Of an unfinished life that sways the  
world,

Shall tower as sovereign emblem over  
all.

The kobold Thought moves with us  
when we shift

Our dwelling to escape him; perched  
aloft

On the first load of household-stuff he  
went;

For, where the mind goes, goes old fur-  
niture.

I, who to Chartres came to feed my eye  
And give to Fancy one clear holiday,  
Scarce saw the minster for the thoughts  
it stirred

Buzzing o'er past and future with vain  
quest.

Here once there stood a homely wooden  
church,

Which slow devotion nobly changed for  
this

That echoes vaguely to my modern  
steps.

By suffrage universal it was built,  
As practised then, for all the country  
came

From far as Rouen, to give votes for  
God,

Each vote a block of stone securely laid  
Obedient to the master's deep-mused  
plan.

Will what our ballots rear, responsible  
To no grave forethought, stand so long  
as this?

Delight like this the eye of after days  
Brightening with pride that here, at  
least, were men

Who meant and did the noblest thing  
they knew?

Can our religion cope with deeds like  
this?

We, too, build Gothic contract-shams,  
because

Our deacons have discovered that it pays,  
And pews sell better under vaulted roofs  
Of plaster painted like an Indian squaw.  
Shall not that Western Goth, of whom  
we spoke,

So fiercely practical, so keen of eye,  
Find out, some day, that nothing pays  
but God,

Served whether on the smoke-shut bat-  
tle-field,

In work obscure done honestly, or vote  
For truth unpopular, or faith maintained  
To ruinous convictions, or good deeds  
Wrought for good's sake, mindless of  
heaven or hell?

Shall he not learn that all prosperity,  
Whose bases stretch not deeper than the  
sense,

Is but a trick of this world's atmosphere,  
A desert-born mirage of spire and dome,  
Or find too late, the Past's long lesson  
missed,

That dust the prophets shake from off  
their feet

Grows heavy to drag down both tower  
and wall?

I know not; but, sustained by sure  
belief

That man still rises level with the height  
Of noblest opportunities, or makes

Such, if the time supply not, I can wait.  
I gaze round on the windows, pride of  
France,

Each the bright gift of some mechanic  
guild.



Who loved their city and thought gold  
 well spent  
 To make her beautiful with piety ;  
 I pause, transfigured by some stripe of  
 bloom,  
 And my mind throngs with shining  
 auguries,  
 Circle on circle, bright as seraphim,  
 With golden trumpets, silent, that await  
 The signal to blow news of good to men.

Then the revulsion came that always  
 comes  
 After these dizzy elations of the mind :  
 And with a passionate pang of doubt I  
 cried,  
 " O mountain-born, sweet with snow-  
 filtered air  
 From uncontaminated wells of ether drawn  
 And never-broken secrecies of sky,  
 Freedom, with anguish won, misprized  
 till lost,  
 They keep thee not who from thy sacred  
 eyes  
 Catch the consuming lust of sensual  
 good  
 And the brute's license of unfettered  
 will.  
 Far from the popular shout and venal  
 breath  
 Of Cleon blowing the mob's baser mind  
 To bubbles of wind-piloted conceit,  
 Thou shrinkest, gathering up thy skirts,  
 to hide  
 In fortresses of solitary thought  
 And private virtue strong in self-re-  
 straint.  
 Must we too forfeit thee misunderstood,  
 Content with names, nor inly wise to  
 know  
 That best things perish of their own ex-  
 cess,  
 And quality o'er-driven becomes defect ?  
 Nay, is it thou indeed that we have  
 glimpsed,  
 Or rather such illusion as of old  
 Through Athens glided menadlike and  
 Rome,  
 A shape of vapor, mother of vain dreams  
 And mutinous traditions, specious plea  
 Of the glaived tyrant and long-memoried  
 priest ? "

I walked forth saddened ; for all thought  
 is sad,  
 And leaves a bitterish savor in the  
 brain,

Tonic, it may be, not delectable,  
 And turned, reluctant, for a parting look  
 At those old weather-pitted images  
 Of bygone struggle, now so sternly calm.  
 About their shoulders sparrows had  
 built nests,  
 And fluttered, chirping, from gray perch  
 to perch,  
 Now on a mitre poising, now a crown,  
 Irreverently happy. While I thought  
 How confident they were, what, careless  
 hearts  
 Flew on those lightsome wings and  
 shared the sun,  
 A larger shadow crossed ; and looking  
 up,  
 I saw where, nesting in the hoary towers,  
 The sparrow-hawk slid forth on noise-  
 less air,  
 With sidelong head that watched the  
 joy below,  
 Grim Norman baron o'er this clan of  
 Kelts.  
 Enduring Nature, force conservative,  
 Indifferent to our noisy whims ! Men  
 prate  
 Of all heads to an equal grade cashiered  
 On level with the dullest, and expect  
 (Sick of no worse distemper than them-  
 selves)  
 A wondrous cure-all in equality ;  
 They reason that To-morrow must be  
 wise  
 Because To-day was not, nor Yesterday,  
 As if good days were shapen of them-  
 selves,  
 Not of the very lifeblood of men's souls ;  
 Meanwhile, long-suffering, imperturb-  
 able,  
 Thou quietly complet'st thy syllogism,  
 And from the premise sparrow here below  
 Draw'st sure conclusion of the hawk  
 above,  
 Pleased with the soft-billed songster,  
 pleased no less  
 With the fierce beak of nature's aquiline.

Thou beautiful Old Time, now hid away  
 In the Past's valley of Avilion,  
 Haply, like Arthur, till thy wound be  
 healed,  
 Then to reclaim the sword and crown  
 again !  
 Thrice beautiful to us ; perchance less  
 fair  
 To who possessed thee, as a mountain  
 seems

To dwellers round its bases but a heap  
Of barren obstacle that lairs the storm  
And the avalanche's silent bolt holds  
back

Leashed with a hair, — meanwhile some  
far-off clown,

Hereditary delver of the plain,  
Sees it an unmoved vision of repose,  
Nest of the morning, and conjectures  
there

The dance of streams to idle shepherds'  
pipes,

And fairer habitations softly hung  
On breezy slopes, or hid in valleys cool,  
For happier men. No mortal ever  
dreams

That the scant isthmus he encamps upon  
Between two oceans, one, the Stormy,  
passed,

And one, the Peaceful, yet to venture on,  
Has been that future whereto prophets  
yearned

For the fulfilment of Earth's cheated  
hope,

Shall be that past which nerveless poets  
moan

As the lost opportunity of song.

O Power, more near my life than life  
itself

(Or what seems life to us in sense im-  
mured),

Even as the roots, shut in the darksome  
earth.

Share in the tree-top's joyance, and  
conceive

Of sunshine and wide air and winged  
things

By sympathy of nature, so do I  
Have evidence of Thee so far above,  
Yet in and of me! Rather Thou the  
root

Invisibly sustaining, hid in light,  
Not darkness, or in darkness made by  
us.

If sometimes I must hear good men  
debate

Of other witness of Thyself than Thou,  
As if there needed any help of ours  
To nurse Thy flickering life, that else  
must cease,

Blown out, as 't were a candle, by men's  
breath,

My soul shall not be taken in their snare,  
To change her inward surety for their  
doubt

Muffled from sight in formal robes of  
proof:

While she can only feel herself through  
Thee,

I fear not Thy withdrawal; more I fear,  
Seeing, to know Thee not, hoodwinked  
with dreams

Of signs and wonders, while, unnoticed,  
Thou,

Walking Thy garden still, commun'st  
with men,

Missed in the commonplace of miracle.

**'THREE MEMORIAL POEMS.**



“Coscienza fusca  
O della propria o dell' altrui vergogna  
Par sentirà la tua parola brusca.”

If I let fall a word of bitter mirth  
When public shames more shameful pardon won,  
Some have misjudged me, and my service done,  
If small, yet faithful, deemed of little worth :  
Through veins that drew their life from Western earth  
Two hundred years and more my blood hath run  
In no polluted course from sire to son ;  
And thus was I predestined ere my birth  
To love the soil wherewith my fibres own  
Instinctive sympathies ; yet love it so  
As honor would, nor lightly to dethrone  
Judgment, the stamp of manhood, nor forego  
The son's right to a mother dearer grown  
With growing knowledge and more chaste than snow.

# THREE MEMORIAL POEMS.

TO

E. L. GODKIN,

IN CORDIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF HIS EMINENT SERVICE  
IN HEIGHTENING AND PURIFYING THE TONE  
OF OUR POLITICAL THOUGHT,

*These Three Poems*

ARE DEDICATED.

\* \* Readers, it is hoped, will remember that, by his Ode at the Harvard Commemoration, the author had precluded himself from many of the natural outlets of thought and feeling common to such occasions as are celebrated in these poems.

## ODE

READ AT THE ONE HUNDREDDTH ANNI-  
VERSARY OF THE FIGHT AT CONCORD  
BRIDGE.

19TH APRIL, 1875.

### I.

WHO cometh over the hills,  
Her garments with morning sweet,  
The dance of a thousand rills  
Making music before her feet ?  
Her presence freshens the air ;  
Sunshine steals light from her face ;  
The leaden footstep of Care  
Leaps to the tune of her pace,  
Fairness of all that is fair,  
Grace at the heart of all grace,  
Sweetener of hut and of hall,  
Bringer of life out of naught,  
Freedom, O, fairest of all  
The daughters of Time and Thought !

### II.

She cometh, cometh to-day :  
Hark ! hear ye not her tread,  
Sending a thrill through your clay,  
Under the sod there, ye dead,  
Her nurslings and champions ?  
Do ye not hear, as she comes,  
The bay of the deep-mouthed guns,

The gathering rote of the drums ?  
The bells that called ye to prayer,  
How wildly they clamor on her,  
Crying, " She cometh ! prepare  
Her to praise and her to honor,  
That a hundred years ago  
Scattered here in blood and tears  
Potent seeds wherefrom should grow  
Gladness for a hundred years ! "

### III.

Tell me, young men, have ye seen  
Creature of diviner mien  
For true hearts to long and cry for,  
Manly hearts to live and die for ?  
What hath she that others want ?  
Brows that all endearments haunt,  
Eyes that make it sweet to dare,  
Smiles that cheer untimely death  
Looks that fortify despair,  
Tones more brave than trumpet's breath,  
Tell me, maidens, have ye known  
Household charm more sweetly rare,  
Grace of woman ampler blown,  
Modesty more debonair,  
Younger heart with wit full grown ?  
O for an hour of my prime,  
The pulse of my hotter years,  
That I might praise her in rhyme  
Would tingle your eyelids to tears,  
Oursweetness, our strength, and our star,

Our hope, our joy, and our trust,  
Who lifted us out of the dust,  
And made us whatever we are !

## IV.

Whiter than moonshine upon snow  
Her raiment is, but round the hem  
Crimson stained ; and, as to and fro  
Her sandals flash, we see on them,  
And on her instep veined with blue,  
Flecks of crimson, on those fair feet,  
High-arched, Diana-like, and fleet,  
Fit for no grosser stain than dew :  
O, call them rather chrims than stains,  
Sacred and from heroic veins !  
For, in the glory-guarded pass,  
Her haughty and far-shining head  
She bowed to shrive Leonidas  
With his imperishable dead ;  
Her, too, Morgarten saw,  
Where the Swiss lion fleshed his icy paw ;  
She followed Cromwell's quenchless star  
Where the grim Puritan tread  
Shook Marston, Naseby, and Dunbar :  
Yea, on her feet are dearer dyes  
Yet fresh, nor looked on with untearful  
eyes.

## V.

Our fathers found her in the woods  
Where Nature meditates and broods,  
The seeds of unexampled things  
Which Time to consummation brings  
Through life and death and man's un-  
stable moods ;  
They met her here, not recognized,  
A sylvan huntress clothed in furs,  
To whose chaste wants her bow sufficed,  
Nor dreamed what destinies were hers :  
She taught them bee-like to create  
Their simpler forms of Church and State ;  
She taught them to endure  
The past with other functions than it  
knew,  
And turn in channels strange the uncer-  
tain stream of Fate ;  
Better than all, she fenced them in their  
need  
With iron-handed Duty's sternest creed,  
'Gainst Self's lean wolf that ravens word  
and deed.

## VI.

Why cometh she hither to-day  
To this low village of the plain  
Far from the Present's loud highway,  
From Trade's cool heart and seething  
brain ?

Why cometh she ? She was not far away.  
Since the soul touched it, not in vain,  
With pathos of immortal gain,  
'Tis here her fondest memories stay.  
She loves yon pine-bemurmured ridge  
Where now our broad-browed poet sleeps,  
Dear to both Englands ; near him he  
Who wore the ring of Canace ;  
But most her heart to rapture leaps  
Where stood that era-parting bridge,  
O'er which, with footfall still as dew,  
The Old Time passed into the New ;  
Where, as your stealthy river creeps,  
He whispers to his listening weeds  
Tales of sublimest homespun deeds.  
Here English law and English thought  
'Gainst the self-will of England fought ;  
And here were men (coequal with their  
fate),

Who did great things, unconscious they  
were great.

They dreamed not what a die was cast  
With that first answering shot ; what  
then ?

There was their duty ; they were men  
Schooled the soul's inward gospel to obey,  
Though leading to the lion's den.

They felt the habit-hallowed world give  
way

Beneath their lives, and on went they,  
Unhappy who was last.

When Buttrick gave the word,  
That awful idol of the unchallenged Past,  
Strong in their love, and in their lineage  
strong,

Fell crashing : if they heard it not,  
Yet the earth heard,

Nor ever hath forgot,

As on from startled throne to throne,

Where Superstition sate or conscious  
Wrong,

A shudder ran of some dread birth un-  
known.

Thrice venerable spot !

River more fateful than the Rubicon !

O'er those red planks, to snatch her dia-  
dem,

Man's Hope, star-girdled, sprang with  
them,

And over ways untried the feet of Doom  
strode on.

## VII.

Think you these felt no charms  
In their gray homesteads and embowered  
farms ?

In household faces waiting at the door



Their evening step should lighten up no more ?

In fields their boyish feet had known ?  
In trees their fathers' hands had set,  
And which with them had grown,  
Widening each year their leafy coronet ?  
Felt they no pang of passionate regret  
For those unsold goods that seem so much our own ?

These things are dear to every man that lives,

And life prized more for what it lends than gives.

Yea, many a tie, through iteration sweet,  
Strove to detain their fatal feet ;

And yet the enduring half they chose,  
Whose choice decides a man life's slave or king,

The invisible things of God before the seen and known :

Therefore their memory inspiration blows  
With echoes gathering on from zone to zone ;

For manhood is the one immortal thing  
Beneath Time's changeful sky,

And, where it lightened once, from age to age,

Men come to learn, in grateful pilgrimage,

That length of days is knowing when to die.

## VIII.

What marvellous change of things and men !

She, a world-wandering orphan then,  
So mighty now ! Those are her streams  
That whirl the myriad, myriad wheels  
Of all that does, and all that dreams,  
Of all that thinks, and all that feels,  
Through spaces stretched from sea to sea ;  
By idle tongues and busy brains,  
By who doth right, and who refrains,  
Hers are our losses and our gains ;  
Our maker and our victim she.

## IX.

Maiden half mortal, half divine,  
We triumphed in thy coming ; to the brinks

Our hearts were filled with pride's tumultuous wine ;

Better to-day who rather feels than thinks.

Yet will some graver thoughts intrude,  
And cares of sterner mood ;

They won thee : who shall keep thee ?  
From the deeps

Where disrowned empires o'er their ruins brood,

And many a thwarted hope wrings its weak hands and weeps,

I hear the voice as of a mighty wind  
From all heaven's caverns rushing unconfined,

"I, Freedom, dwell with Knowledge :  
I abide

With men whom dust of faction cannot blind

To the slow tracings of the Eternal Mind ;

With men by culture trained and fortified,

Who bitter duty to sweet lusts prefer,  
Fearless to counsel and obey.

Conscience my sceptre is, and law my sword,

Not to be drawn in passion or in play,  
But terrible to punish and deter ;

Implacable as God's word,  
Like it, a shepherd's crook to them that blindly err.

Your firm-pulsed sires, my martyrs and my saints,

Offshoots of that one stock whose patient sense

Hath known to mingle flux with permanence,

Rated my chaste denials and restraints  
Above the moment's dear-paid paradise :

Beware lest, shifting with Time's gradual creep,

The light that guided shine into your eyes.

The envious Powers of ill nor wink nor sleep :

Be therefore timely wise,  
Nor laugh when this one steals, and that one lies,

As if your luck could cheat those sleepless spies,

Till the deaf Fury comes your house to sweep ! "

I hear the voice, and unaffrighted bow ;  
Ye shall not be prophetic now,

Heralds of ill, that darkening fly  
Between my vision and the rainbowed sky,

Or on the left your hoarse forebodings croak

From many a blasted bough  
On Yggdrasil's storm-sinewed oak,

That once was green, Hope of the West,  
as thou :

Yet pardon if I tremble while I boast ;  
For I have loved as those who pardon  
most.

## x.

Away, ungrateful doubt, away !  
At least she is our own to-day.  
Break into rapture, my song,  
Verses, leap forth in the sun,  
Bearing the joyance along  
Like a train of fire as ye run !  
Pause not for choosing of words,  
Let them but blossom and sing  
Blithe as the orchards and birds  
With the new coming of spring !  
Dance in your jollity, bells ;  
Shout, cannon ; cease not, ye drums ;  
Answer, ye hillside and dells ;  
Bow, all ye people ! She comes,  
Radiant, calm-fronted, as when  
She hallowed that April day.  
Stay with us ! Yes, thou shalt stay,  
Softener and strengthener of men,  
Freedom, not won by the vain,  
Not to be courted in play,  
Not to be kept without pain.  
Stay with us ! Yes, thou wilt stay,  
Handmaid and mistress of all,  
Kinder of deed and of thought,  
Thou that to hut and to hall  
Equal deliverance brought !  
Souls of her martyrs, draw near,  
Touch our dull lips with your fire,  
That we may praise without fear  
Her our delight, our desire,  
Our faith's inextinguishable star,  
Our hope, our remembrance, our trust,  
Our present, our past, our to be,  
Who will mingle her life with our dust  
And makes us deserve to be free !

## UNDER THE OLD ELM.

POEM READ AT CAMBRIDGE ON THE  
HUNDRETH ANNIVERSARY OF WASH-  
INGTON'S TAKING COMMAND OF THE  
AMERICAN ARMY, 3D JULY, 1775.

## I.

## 1.

WORDS pass as wind, but where great  
deeds were done  
A power abides transfused from sire to  
son :  
The boy feels deeper meanings thrill his  
ear.

That tingling through his pulse life-long  
shall run,

With sure impulsion to keep honor clear,  
When, pointing down, his father whis-  
pers, " Here,

Here, where we stand, stood he, the  
purely Great,

Whose soul no siren passion could un-  
sphere,

Then nameless, now a power and mixed  
with fate."

Historic town, thou holdest sacred dust,  
Once known to men as pious, learn'd,  
just,

And one memorial pile that dares to last ;  
But Memory greets with reverential kiss  
No spot in all thy circuit sweet as this,  
Touched by that modest glory as it past,  
O'er which yon elm hath piously dis-  
played

These hundred years its monumental  
shade.

## 2.

Of our swift passage through this scenery  
Of life and death, more durable than we,  
What landmark so congenial as a tree  
Repeating its green legend every spring,  
And, with a yearly ring,  
Recording the fair seasons as they flee,  
Type of our brief but still-renewed  
mortality ?

We fall as leaves : the immortal trunk  
remains,

Built with costly juice of hearts and  
brains

Gone to the mould now, whither all that  
be

Vanish returnless, yet are procreant still  
In human lives to come of good or ill,  
And feed unseen the roots of Destiny.

## II.

## 1.

MEN's monuments, grown old, forget  
their names

They should eternize, but the place  
Where shining souls have passed imbibes  
a grace

Beyond mere earth ; some sweetness of  
their fames

Leaves in the soil its unextinguished  
trace,

Pungent, pathetic, sad with nobler aims,  
That penetrates our lives and heightens  
them or shames.

This insubstantial world and fleet  
 Seems solid for a moment when we stand  
 On dust ennobled by heroic feet  
 Once mighty to sustain a tottering land,  
 And mighty still such burthen to upbear,  
 Nor doomed to tread the path of things  
 that merely were :

Our sense, refined with virtue of the spot,  
 Across the mists of Lethe's sleepy stream  
 Recalls him, the sole chief without a  
 blot,

No more a pallid image and a dream,  
 But as he dwelt with men decorously  
 supreme.

2.

Our grosser minds need this terrestrial  
 hint

To raise long-buried days from tombs of  
 print :

"Here stood he," softly we repeat,  
 And lo, the statue shrined and still  
 In that gray minster-front we call the  
 Past,

Feels in its frozen veins our pulses thrill,  
 Breathes living air and mocks at Death's  
 deceit.

It warms, it stirs, comes down to us at  
 last,

Its features human with familiar light,  
 A man, beyond the historian's art to kill,  
 Or sculptor's to efface with patient chisel-  
 blight.

3.

Sure the dumb earth hath memory, nor  
 for naught

Was Fancy given, on whose enchanted  
 loom

Present and Past commingle, fruit and  
 bloom

Of one fair bough, inseparably wrought  
 Into the seamless tapestry of thought.

So charmed, with undeluded eye we see  
 In history's fragmentary tale

Bright clews of continuity,  
 Learn that high natures over Time pre-  
 vail,

And feel ourselves a link in that entail  
 That binds all ages past with all that  
 are to be.

III.

1.

BENEATH our consecrated elm  
 A century ago he stood,  
 Famed vaguely for that old fight in the  
 wood

Whose red surge sought, but could not  
 overwhelm

The life foredoomed to wield our rough-  
 hewn helm : —

From colleges, where now the gown  
 To arms had yielded, from the town,  
 Our rude self-summoned levies flocked  
 to see

The new-come chiefs and wonder which  
 was he.

No need to question long ; close-lipped  
 and tall,

Long trained in murder-brooding forests  
 lone

To bridle others' clamors and his own,  
 Firmly erect, he towered above them  
 all,

The incarnate discipline that was to  
 free

With iron curb that armed democracy.

2.

A motley rout was that which came to  
 stare,

In raiment tanned by years of sun and  
 storm,

Of every shape that was not uniform,  
 Dotted with regimentals here and there ;

An army all of captains, used to pray  
 And stiff in fight, but serious drill's

despair,  
 Skilled to debate their orders, not  
 obey ;

Deacons were there, selectmen, men of  
 note

In half-tamed hamlets ambushed round  
 with woods,

Ready to settle Freewill by a vote,  
 But largely liberal to its private moods ;

Prompt to assert by manners, voice, or  
 pen,

Or ruder arms, their rights as English-  
 men,

Nor much fastidious as to how and  
 when :

Yet seasoned stuff and fittest to create  
 A thought-staid army or a lasting

state :

Haughty they said he was, at first ;  
 severe ;

But owned, as all men own, the steady  
 hand

Upon the bridle, patient to command,  
 Prized, as all prize, the justice pure

from fear,  
 And learned to honor first, then love  
 him, then revere.



Such power there is in clear-eyed self-restraint  
 And purpose clean as light from every selfish taint.

## 3.

Musing beneath the legendary tree,  
 The years between furl off: I seem to see  
 The sun-flecks, shaken the stirred foliage through,  
 Dapple with gold his sober buff and blue  
 And weave prophetic aureoles round the head  
 That shines our beacon now nor darkens with the dead.  
 O, man of silent mood,  
 A stranger among strangers then,  
 How art thou since renowned the Great, the Good,  
 Familiar as the day in all the homes of men!  
 The winged years, that winnow praise and blame,  
 Blow many names out: they but fan to flame  
 The self-renewing splendors of thy fame.

## IV.

## 1.

How many subtlest influences unite,  
 With spiritual touch of joy or pain,  
 Invisible as air and soft as light,  
 To body forth that image of the brain  
 We call our Country, visionary shape,  
 Loved more than woman, fuller of fire than wine,  
 Whose charm can none define,  
 Nor any, though he flee it, can escape!  
 All party-colored threads the weaver Time  
 Sets in his web, now trivial, now sublime,  
 All memories, all forebodings, hopes and fears,  
 Mountain and river, forest, prairie, sea,  
 A hill, a rock, a homestead, field, or tree,  
 The casual gleanings of unreckoned years,  
 Take goddess-shape at last and there is She,  
 Old at our birth, new as the springing hours,  
 Shrine of our weakness, fortress of our powers.

Consoler, kindler, peerless mid her peers,  
 A force that 'neath our conscious being stirs,  
 A life to give ours permanence, when we  
 Are borne to mingle our poor earth with hers,  
 And all this glowing world goes with us on our biers.

## 2.

Nations are long results, by ruder ways,  
 Gathering the might that warrants length of days;  
 They may be pieced of half-reluctant shares  
 Welded by hammer-strokes of broad-brained kings,  
 Or from a doughty people grow, the heirs  
 Of wise traditions widening cautious rings;  
 At best they are computable things,  
 A strength behind us making us feel bold  
 In right, or, as may chance, in wrong;  
 Whose force by figures may be summed and told,  
 So many soldiers, ships, and dollars strong,  
 And we but drops that bear compulsory part  
 In the dumb throb of a mechanic heart;  
 But Country is a shape of each man's mind  
 Sacred from definition, unconfined  
 By the cramped walls where daily drudgeries grind;  
 An inward vision, yet an outward birth  
 Of sweet familiar heaven and earth;  
 A brooding Presence that stirs motions blind  
 Of wings within our embryo being's shell  
 That wait but her completer spell  
 To make us eagle-natured, fit to dare  
 Life's nobler spaces and untarnished air.

## 3.

You, who hold dear this self-conceived ideal,  
 Whose faith and works alone can make it real,  
 Bring all your fairest gifts to deck her shrine  
 Who lifts our lives away from Thine and Mine  
 And feeds the lamp of manhood more divina

With fragrant oils of quenchless constancy.

When all have done their utmost, surely he

Hath given the best who gives a character

Erect and constant, which nor any shock  
Of loosened elements, nor the forceful sea

Of flowing or of ebbing fates, can stir  
From its deep bases in the living rock  
Of ancient manhood's sweet security :  
And this he gave, serenely far from pride  
As baseness, boon with prosperous stars allied,

Part of what nobler seed shall in our loins abide.

4.

No bond of men as common pride so strong,

In names time-filtered for the lips of song,

Still operant, with the primal Forces bound

Whose currents, on their spiritual round,  
Transfuse our mortal will nor are gain-said :

These are their arsenals, these the exhaustless mines

That give a constant heart in great designs ;

These are the stuff whereof such dreams are made

As make heroic men : thus surely he  
Still holds in place the massy blocks he laid

'Neath our new frame, enforcing soberly  
The self-control that makes and keeps a people free.

V.

1.

O, FOR a drop of that Cornelian ink  
Which gave Agricola dateless length of days,

To celebrate him fitly, neither swerve  
To phrase unkempt, nor pass discretion's brink,

With him so statue-like in sad reserve,  
So diffident to claim, so forward to deserve !

Nor need I shun due influence of his fame

Who, mortal among mortals, seemed as  
now

The equestrian shape with unimpassioned brow,  
That paces silent on through vistas of acclaim.

2.

What figure more immovably august  
Than that grave strength so patient and so pure,

Calm in good fortune, when it wavered, sure,

That mind serene, impenetrably just,  
Modelled on classic lines so simple they endure ?

That soul so softly radiant and so white  
The track it left seems less of fire than light,

Cold but to such as love distemperature ?  
And if pure light, as some deem, be the force

That drives rejoicing planets on their course,

Why for his power benign seek an impurer source ?

His was the true enthusiasm that burns long,

Domestically bright,  
Fed from itself and shy of human sight,  
The hidden force that makes a lifetime strong,

And not the short-lived fuel of a song.  
Passionless, say you ? What is passion for

But to sublime our natures and control  
To front heroic toils with late return,  
Or none, or such as shames the conqueror ?

That fire was fed with substance of the soul

And not with holiday stubble, that could burn,

Unpraised of men who after bonfires run,  
Through seven slow years of unadvancing war,

Equal when fields were lost or fields were won,

With breath of popular applause or blame,

Nor fanned nor damped, unquenchably the same,

Too inward to be reached by flaws of idle fame.

3.

Soldier and statesman, rarest unison ;  
High-poised example of great duties done  
Simply as breathing, a world's honors

worn

As life's indifferent gifts to all men born ;  
 Dumb for himself, unless it were to God,  
 But for his barefoot soldiers eloquent,  
 Tramping the snow to coral where they  
 trod,  
 Held by his awe in hollow-eyed content ;  
 Modest, yet firm as Nature's self ; un-  
 blamed  
 Save by the men his nobler temper  
 shamed ;  
 Never seduced through show of present  
 good  
 By other than unsetting lights to steer  
 New-trimmed in Heaven, nor than his  
 steadfast mood  
 More steadfast, far from rashness as from  
 fear ;  
 Rigid, but with himself first, grasping  
 still  
 In swerveless poise the wave-beat helm  
 of will ;  
 Not honored then or now because he  
 wooed  
 The popular voice, but that he still with-  
 stood ;  
 Broad-minded, higher-souled, there is  
 but one  
 Who was all this and ours, and all men's,  
 — WASHINGTON.

## 4.

Minds strong by fits, irregularly great,  
 That flash and darken like revolving  
 lights,  
 Catch more the vulgar eye unschooled  
 to wait  
 On the long curve of patient days and  
 nights  
 Rounding a whole life to the circle fair  
 Of orb'd fulfilment ; and this balanced  
 soul,  
 So simple in its grandeur, coldly bare  
 Of draperies theatric, standing there  
 In perfect symmetry of self-control,  
 Seems not so great at first, but greater  
 grows  
 Still as we look, and by experience learn  
 How grand this quiet is, how nobly  
 stern  
 The discipline that wrought through  
 lifelong throes  
 That energetic passion of repose.

## 5.

A nature too decorous and severe,  
 Too self-respectful in its griefs and joys,

For ardent girls and boys  
 Who find no genius in a mind so clear  
 That its grave depths seem obvious and  
 near,  
 Nor a soul great that made so little  
 noise.  
 They feel no force in that calm-cadenced  
 phrase,  
 The habitual full-dress of his well-bred  
 mind,  
 That seems to pace the minuet's courtly  
 maze  
 And tell of ampler leisures, roomier  
 length of days.  
 His firm-based brain, to self so little  
 kind  
 That no tumultuary blood could blind,  
 Formed to control men, not amaze,  
 Looms not like those that borrow height  
 of haze :  
 It was a world of statelier movement  
 then  
 Than this we fret in, he a denizen  
 Of that ideal Rome that made a man for  
 men.

## VI.

## 1.

THE longer on this earth we live  
 And weigh the various qualities of men,  
 Seeing how most are fugitive,  
 Or fitful gifts, at best, of now and then,  
 Wind-wavered corpse-lights, daughters  
 of the fen,  
 The more we feel the high stern-featured  
 beauty  
 Of plain devotedness to duty,  
 Steadfast and still, nor paid with mortal  
 praise,  
 But finding amplest recompense  
 For life's ungarlanded expense  
 In work done squarely and unwasted  
 days.  
 For this we honor him, that he could  
 know  
 How sweet the service and how free  
 Of her, God's eldest daughter here be-  
 low,  
 And choose in meanest raiment which  
 was she.

## 2.

Placid completeness, life without a fall  
 From faith or highest aims, truth's  
 breachless wall,  
 Surely if any fame can bear the touch,



His will say "Here!" at the last trumpet's call,  
The unexpressive man whose life expressed so much.

VII.

1.

NEVER to see a nation born  
Hath been given to mortal man,  
Unless to those who, on that summer morn,  
Gazed silent when the great Virginian  
Unsheathed the sword whose fatal flash  
Shot union through the incoherent clash  
Of our loose atoms, crystallizing them  
Around a single will's unpliant stem,  
And making purpose of emotion rash.  
Out of that scabbard sprang, as from its womb,  
Nebulous at first but hardening to a star,  
Through mutual share of sunburst and of gloom,  
The common faith that made us what we are.

2.

That lifted blade transformed our jangling clans,  
Till then provincial, to Americans,  
And made a unity of wildering plans;  
Here was the doom fixed: here is marked the date  
When this New World awoke to man's estate,  
Burnt its last ship and ceased to look behind:  
Nor thoughtless was the choice; no love or hate  
Could from its poise move that deliberate mind,  
Weighing between too early and too late  
Those pitfalls of the man refused by Fate:  
His was the impartial vision of the great  
Who see not as they wish, but as they find.  
He saw the dangers of defeat, nor less  
The incomputable perils of success;  
The sacred past thrown by, an empty rind;  
The future, cloud-land, snare of prophets blind;  
The waste of war, the ignominy of peace;  
On either hand a sullen rear of woe,

Whose garnered lightnings none could guess,  
Piling its thunder-heads and muttering "Cease!"  
Yet drew not back his hand, but gravely chose  
The seeming-desperate task whence our new nation rose.

3.

A noble choice and of immortal seed!  
Nor deem that acts heroic wait on chance  
Or easy were as in a boy's romance;  
The man's whole life precludes the single deed  
That shall decide if his inheritance  
Be with the sifted few of matchless breed,  
Our race's sap and sustenance,  
Or with the unmotivated herd that only sleep and feed.  
Choice seems a thing indifferent; thus or so,  
What matters it? The Fates with mocking face  
Look on inexorable, nor seem to know  
Where the lot lurks that gives life's foremost place.  
Yet Duty's leaden casket holds it still,  
And but two ways are offered to our will,  
Toil with rare triumph, ease with safe disgrace,  
The problem still for us and all of human race.  
He chose, as men choose, where most danger showed,  
Nor ever faltered 'neath the load  
Of petty cares, that gall great hearts the most,  
But kept right on the strenuous up-hill road,  
Strong to the end, above complaint or boast:  
The popular tempest on his rock-mailed coast  
Wasted its wind-borne spray,  
The noisy marvel of a day;  
His soul sate still in its unstormed abode.

VIII.

VIRGINIA gave us this imperial man  
Cast in the massive mould  
Of those high-statured ages old

Which into grander forms our mortal  
metal ran ;  
She gave us this unblemished gentle-  
man :  
What shall we give her back but love  
and praise  
As in the dear old unestrangèd days  
Before the inevitable wrong began ?  
Mother of States and undiminished men,  
Thou gavest us a country, giving him,  
And we owe alway what we owed thee  
then :  
The boon thou wouldst have snatched  
from us agen  
Shines as before with no abatement dim.  
A great man's memory is the only  
thing  
With influence to outlast the present  
whim  
And bind us as when here he knit our  
golden ring.  
All of him that was subject to the  
hours  
Lies in thy soil and makes it part of  
ours :  
Across more recent graves,  
Where unresentful Nature waves  
Her pennons o'er the shot-ploughed sod,  
Proclaiming the sweet Truce of God,  
We from this consecrated plain stretch  
out  
Our hands as free from afterthought or  
doubt  
As here the united North  
Poured her embrownèd manhood forth  
In welcome of our savior and thy son.  
Through battle we have better learned  
thy worth,  
The long-breathed valor and undaunted  
will,  
Which, like his own, the day's disaster  
done,  
Could, safe in manhood, suffer and be  
still.  
Both thine and ours the victory hardly  
won ;  
If ever with distempered voice or pen  
We have misdeemed thee, here we take  
it back,  
And for the dead of both don common  
black.  
Be to us evermore as thou wast then,  
As we forget thou hast not always  
been,  
Mother of States and unpolluted men,  
Virginia, fitly named from England's  
manly queen !

## AN ODE

FOR THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1878.

I.

1.

ENTRANCED I saw a vision in the cloud  
That loitered dreaming in yon sunset sky,  
Full of fair shapes, half creatures of the  
eye,  
Half chance-evoked by the wind's fantasy  
In golden mist, an ever-shifting crowd :  
There, mid unreal forms that came and  
went  
In air-spun robes, of evanescent dye,  
A woman's semblance shone pre-emi-  
nent ;  
Not armed like Pallas, not like Hera  
proud,  
But, as on household diligence intent,  
Beside her visionary wheel she bent  
Like Aretè or Bertha, nor than they  
Less keenly in her port : about her  
knee  
Glad children clustered confident in play :  
Placid her pose, the calm of energy ;  
And over her broad brow in many a  
round  
(That loosened would have gilt her gar-  
ment's hem),  
Succinct, as toil prescribes, the hair was  
wound  
In lustrous coils, a natural diadem.  
The cloud changed shape, obsequious to  
the whim  
Of some transmuting influence felt in  
me,  
And, looking now, a wolf I seemed to see  
Limned in that vapor, gaunt and hun-  
ger-bold,  
Threatening her charge : resolve in every  
limb,  
Erect she flamed in mail of sun-wove  
gold,  
Penthesilea's self for battle dight ;  
One arm uplifted braced a flickering  
spear,  
And one her adamantine shield made  
light ;  
Her face, helm-shadowed, grew a thing  
to fear,  
And her fierce eyes, by danger challenged,  
took  
Her trident-sæptred mother's dauntless  
look.  
" I know thee now, O goddess-born !"  
I cried,

And turned with loftier brow and firmer  
stride ;  
For in that spectral cloud-work I had  
seen  
Her image, bodied forth by love and  
pride,  
The fearless, the benign, the mother-  
eyed,  
The fairer world's toil-consecrated queen.

## 2.

What shape by exile dreamed elates the  
mind  
Like hers whose hand, a fortress of the  
poor,  
No blood in vengeance spilt, though law-  
ful, stains ?  
Who never turned a suppliant from her  
door ?  
Whose conquests are the gains of all  
mankind ?  
To-day her thanks shall fly on every  
wind,  
Unstinted, unrebuked, from shore to  
shore,  
One love, one hope, and not a doubt be-  
hind !  
Cannon to cannon shall repeat her praise,  
Banner to banner flap it forth in flame ;  
Her children shall rise up to bless her  
name,  
And wish her harmless length of days,  
The mighty mother of a mighty brood,  
Blessed in all tongues and dear to every  
blood,  
The beautiful, the strong, and, best of  
all, the good !

## 3.

Seven years long was the bow  
Of battle bent, and the heightening  
Storm-heaps convulsed with the throe  
Of their uncontainable lightning ;  
Seven years long heard the sea  
Crash of navies and wave-borne thunder ;  
Then drifted the cloud-rack a-lee,  
And new stars were seen, a world's  
wonder ;  
Each by her sisters made bright,  
All binding all to their stations,  
Cluster of manifold light  
Startling the old constellations :  
Men looked up and grew pale :  
Was it a comet or star,  
Omen of blessing or bale,  
Hung o'er the ocean afar ?

## 4.

Stormy the day of her birth :  
Was she not born of the strong,  
She, the last ripeness of earth,  
Beautiful, prophesied long ?  
Stormy the days of her prime :  
Hers are the pulses that beat  
Higher for perils sublime,  
Making them fawn at her feet.  
Was she not born of the strong ?  
Was she not born of the wise ?  
Daring and counsel belong  
Of right to her confident eyes :  
Human and motherly they,  
Careless of station or race :  
Hearken ! her children to-day  
Shout for the joy of her face.

## II.

## 1.

No praises of the past are hers,  
No fanes by hallowing time caressed,  
No broken arch that ministers  
To Time's sad instinct in the breast :  
She has not gathered from the years  
Grandeur of tragedies and tears,  
Nor from long leisure the unrest  
That finds repose in forms of classic  
grace :  
These may delight the coming race  
Who haply shall not count it to our  
crime  
That we who fain would sing are here  
before our time.  
She also hath her monuments ;  
Not such as stand decrepitly resigned  
To ruin-mark the path of dead events  
That left no seed of better days be-  
hind,  
The tourist's pensioners that show their  
scars  
And maunder of forgotten wars ;  
She builds not on the ground, but in the  
mind,  
Her open-hearted palaces  
For larger-thoughted men with heaven  
and earth at ease :  
Her march the plump mow marks, the  
sleepless wheel,  
The golden sheaf, the self-swayed com-  
monweal ;  
The happy homesteads hid in orchard  
trees  
Whose sacrificial smokes through peace-  
ful air



Rise lost in heaven, the household's  
 silent prayer ;  
 What architect hath bettered these ?  
 With softened eye the westward traveller  
 sees  
 A thousand miles of neighbors side by  
 side,  
 Holding by toil-won titles fresh from  
 God  
 The lands no serf or seigneur ever trod,  
 With manhood latent in the very sod,  
 Where the long billow of the wheat-  
 field's tide  
 Flows to the sky across the prairie wide,  
 A sweeter vision than the castled Rhine,  
 Kindly with thoughts of Ruth and Bible-  
 days benign.

## 2.

O ancient commonwealths, that we  
 revere  
 Haply because we could not know you  
 near,  
 Your deeds like statues down the aisles  
 of Time  
 Shine peerless in memorial calm sublime,  
 And Athens is a trump. t still, and  
 Rome ;  
 Yet which of your achievements is not  
 foam  
 Weighed with this one of hers (below  
 you far  
 In fame, and born beneath a milder star),  
 That to Earth's orphans, far as curves  
 the dome,  
 Of death-deaf sky, the bounteous West  
 means home,  
 With dear precedence of natural ties  
 That stretch from roof to roof and make  
 men gently wise ?  
 And if the nobler passions wane,  
 Distorted to base use, if the near goal  
 Of insubstantial gain  
 Tempt from the proper race-course of  
 the soul  
 That crowns their patient breath  
 Whose feet, song-sandaled, are too fleet  
 for Death,  
 Yet may she claim one privilege urbane  
 And haply first upon the civic roll,  
 That none can breathe her air nor grow  
 humane.

## 3.

O, better far the briefest hour  
 Of Athens self-consumed, whose plastic  
 power  
 Hid Beauty safe from Death in words  
 or stone ;

Of Rome, fair quarry where those eagles  
 crowd  
 Whose fulgurous vans about the world  
 had blown  
 Triumphant storm and seeds of polity ;  
 Of Venice, fading o'er her shipless sea,  
 Last iridescence of a sunset cloud ;  
 Than this inert prosperity,  
 This bovine comfort in the sense alone !  
 Yet art came slowly even to such as  
 those,  
 Whom no past genius cheated of their  
 own  
 With prudence of o'er-mastering prece-  
 dent ;  
 Petal by petal spreads the perfect rose,  
 Secure of the divine event ;  
 And only children rend the bud half-  
 blown  
 To forestall Nature in her calm intent :  
 Time hath a quiver full of purposes  
 Which miss not of their aim, to us un-  
 known,  
 And brings about the impossible with  
 ease :  
 Haply for us the ideal dawn shall break  
 From where in legend-tinted line  
 The peaks of Hellas drink the morning's  
 wine,  
 To tremble on our lids with mystic  
 sign  
 Till the drowsed ichor in our veins  
 awake  
 And set our pulse in tune with moods  
 divine :  
 Long the day lingered in its sea-fringed  
 nest,  
 Then touched the Tuscan hills with  
 golden lance  
 And paused ; then on to Spain and  
 France  
 The splendor flew, and Albion's misty  
 crest :  
 Shall Ocean bar him from his destined  
 West ;  
 Or are we, then, arrived too late,  
 Doomed with the rest to grope discon-  
 solate,  
 Foreclosed of Beauty by our modern  
 date ?

## III.

## 1.

POETS, as their heads grow gray,  
 Look from too far behind the eyes,  
 Too long-experienced to be wise

In guileless youth's diviner way ;  
 Life sings not now, but prophecies ;  
 Time's shadows they no more behold,  
 But, under them, the riddle old  
 That mocks, bewilders, and defies :  
 In childhood's face the seed of shame,  
 In the green tree an ambushed flame,  
 In Phosphor a vaunt-guard of Night,  
 They, though against their will, di-  
 vine,  
 And dread the care-dispelling wine  
 Stored from the Muse's vintage bright,  
 By age imbued with second-sight.  
 From Faith's own eyelids there peeps  
 out,  
 Even as they look, the leer of doubt ;  
 The festal wreath their fancy loads  
 With care that whispers and forebodes :  
 Nor this our triumph-day can blunt  
 Megæra's goads.

## 2.

Murmur of many voices in the air  
 Denounces us degenerate,  
 Unfaithful guardians of a noble fate,  
 And prompts indifference or despair :  
 Is this the country that we dreamed in  
 youth,  
 Where wisdom and not numbers should  
 have weight,  
 Seed-field of simpler manners, braver  
 truth,  
 Where shams should cease to dominate  
 In household, church, and state ?  
 Is this Atlantis ? This the unpoisoned  
 soil,  
 Sea-whelmed for ages and recovered late,  
 Where parasitic greed no more should  
 coil  
 Round Freedom's stem to bend awry  
 and blight  
 What grew so fair, sole plant of love and  
 light ?  
 Who sit where once in crowned seclu-  
 sion sate  
 The long-proved athletes of debate  
 Trained from their youth, as none thinks  
 needful now ?  
 Is this debating-club where boys dis-  
 pute,  
 And wrangle o'er their stolen fruit,  
 The Senate, erewhile cloister of the  
 few,  
 Where Clay once flashed and Webster's  
 cloudy brow  
 Brooded those bolts of thought that all  
 the horizon knew ?

## 3.

O, as this pensive moonlight blurs my  
 pines,  
 Here while I sit and meditate these lines,  
 To gray-green dreams of what they are  
 by day,  
 So would some light, not reason's sharp-  
 edged ray,  
 Trance me in moonshine as before the  
 flight  
 Of years had won me this unwelcome  
 right  
 To see things as they are, or shall be  
 soon,  
 In the frank prose of undissembling  
 noon !

## 4.

Back to my breast, ungrateful sigh !  
 Whoever fails, whoever errs,  
 The penalty be ours, not hers !  
 The present still seems vulgar, seen too  
 nigh ;  
 The golden age is still the age that's  
 past :  
 I ask no drowsy opiate  
 To dull my vision of that only state  
 Founded on faith in man, and therefore  
 sure to last.  
 For, O, my country, touched by thee,  
 The gray hairs gather back their gold ;  
 Thy thought sets all my pulses free ;  
 The heart refuses to be old ;  
 The love is all that I can see.  
 Not to thy natal-day belong  
 Time's prudent doubt or age's wrong,  
 But gifts of gratitude and song :  
 Unsummoned crowd the thankful words,  
 As sap in spring-time floods the tree,  
 Foreboding the return of birds,  
 For all that thou hast been to me !

## IV.

## 1.

FLAWLESS his heart and tempered to  
 the core  
 Who, beckoned by the forward-leaning  
 wave,  
 First left behind him the firm-footed  
 shore,  
 And, urged by every nerve of sail and oar,  
 Steered for the Unknown which gods to  
 mortals gave,  
 Of thought and action the mysterious  
 door,

Bugbear of fools, & summons to the  
brave :  
Strength found he in the unsympathiz-  
ing sun,  
And strange stars from beneath the  
horizon won,  
And the dumb ocean pitilessly grave :  
High-hearted surely he ;  
But bolder they who first off-cast  
Their moorings from the habitable Past  
And ventured chartless on the sea  
Of storm-engendering Liberty :  
For all earth's width of waters is a  
span,  
And their convulsed existence mere re-  
pose,  
Matched with the unstable heart of man,  
Shoreless in wants, mist-girt in all it  
knows,  
Open to every wind of sect or clan,  
And sudden-passionate in ebbs and flows.

## 2.

They steered by stars the elder shipmen  
knew,  
And laid their courses where the cur-  
rents draw  
Of ancient wisdom channelled deep in  
law,  
The undaunted few  
Who changed the Old World for the  
New,  
And more devoutly prized  
Than all perfection theorized  
The more imperfect that had roots and  
grew.  
They founded deep and well,  
Those danger-chosen chiefs of men  
Who still believed in Heaven and Hell,  
Nor hoped to find a spell,  
In some fine flourish of a pen,  
To make a better man  
Than long-considering Nature will or  
can,

Secure against his own mistakes,  
Content with what life gives or takes,  
And acting still on some fore-ordered  
plan,  
A cog of iron in an iron wheel,  
Too nicely poised to think or feel,  
Dumb motor in a clock-like commonweal.  
They wasted not their brain in schemes  
Of what man might be in some bubble-  
sphere,  
As if he must be other than he seems  
Because he was not what he should be  
here,  
Postponing Time's slow proof to petu-  
lant dreams :  
Yet herein they were great  
Beyond the incredulous lawgivers of yore,  
And wiser than the wisdom of the shelf,  
That they conceived a deeper-rooted  
state,  
Of hardier growth, alive from rind to  
core,  
By making man sole sponsor of himself.

## 3.

God of our fathers, Thou who wast,  
Art, and shalt be when those eye-wise  
who flout  
Thy secret presence shall be lost  
In the great light that dazzles them to  
doubt,  
We, sprung from loins of stalwart men  
Whose strength was in their trust  
That Thou wouldst make thy dwelling  
in their dust  
And walk with them a fellow-citizen  
Who build a city of the just,  
We, who believe Life's bases rest  
Beyond the probe of chemic test,  
Still, like our fathers, feel Thee near,  
Sure that, while lasts the immutable  
decree,  
The land to Human Nature dear  
Shall not be unbeloved of Thee.



**HEARTSEASE AND RUE**

*Along the wayside where we pass bloom few  
Gay plants of heartsease, more of saddening rue;  
So life is mingled; so should poems be  
That speak a conscious word to you and me.*





## 3.

Uprooted is our mountain oak,  
That promised long security of shade  
And brooding-place for many a winged  
thought;

Not by Time's softly-cadenced stroke  
With pauses of relenting pity stayed,  
But ere a root seemed sapt, a bough de-  
cayed,  
From sudden ambush by the whirlwind  
caught  
And in his broad maturity betrayed!

## 4.

Well might I, as of old, appeal to you,  
O mountains woods and streams,  
To help us mourn him, for ye loved him  
too;

But simpler moods befit our modern  
themes,  
And no less perfect birth of nature can,  
Though they yearn tow'rd him, sympa-  
thize with man,  
Save as dumb fellow-prisoners through a  
wall;

Answer ye rather to my call,  
Strong poets of a more unconscious day,  
When Nature spake nor sought nice rea-  
sons why,

Too much for softer arts forgotten since  
That teach our forthright tongue to lisp  
and mince,

And drown in music the heart's bitter  
cry!

Lead me some steps in your director  
way,

Teach me those words that strike a solid  
root

Within the ears of men;  
Ye chiefly, virile both to think and feel,  
Deep-chested Chapman and firm-footed  
Ben,—

For he was masculine from head to heel.  
Nay, let himself stand undiminished by  
With those clear parts of him that will  
not die.

Himself from out the recent dark I claim  
To hear, and, if I flatter him, to blame;  
To show himself, as still I seem to see,  
A mortal, built upon the antique plan,  
Brimful of lusty blood as ever ran,  
And taking life as simply as a tree!

To claim my foiled good-bye let him ap-  
pear,

Large-limbed and human as I saw him  
near,

Loosed from the stiffening uniform of  
fame:

And let me treat him largely: I should  
fear,

(If with too prying lens I chanced to err,  
Mistaking catalogue for character.)  
His wise forefinger raised in smiling  
blame.

Nor would I scant him with judicial  
breath

And turn mere critic in an epitaph;  
I choose the wheat, incurious of the chaff  
That swells fame living, chokes it after  
death,

And would but memorize the shining  
half

Of his large nature that was turned to  
me:

Fain had I joined with those that hon-  
ored him

With eyes that darkened because his  
were dim,

And now been silent: but it might not  
be.

## II. 1.

In some the genius is a thing apart,

A pillared hermit of the brain,  
Hoarding with incommunicable art  
Its intellectual gain;

Man's web of circumstance and fate  
They from their perch of self ob-  
serve,

Indifferent as the figures on a slate  
Are to the planet's sun-sung curve  
Whose bright returns they calculate;

Their nice adjustment, part to part,  
Were shaken from its serviceable mood  
By unpremeditated stirs of heart

Or jar of human neighborhood:  
Some find their natural selves, and only  
then,

In furloughs of divine escape from men,  
And when, by that brief ecstasy left  
bare,

Driven by some instinct of desire,  
They wander worldward, 'tis to blink  
and stare,

Like wild things of the wood about a  
fire,

Dazed by the social glow they cannot  
share;

His nature brooked no lonely lair,  
But basked and bourgeoned in copart-  
nery,

Companionship, and open-windowed  
glee:

He knew, for he had tried,  
 Those speculative heights that lure  
 The unpractised foot, impatient of a  
 guide,  
 Tow'rd ether too attenuately pure  
 For sweet unconscious breath, though  
 dear to pride,  
 But better loved the foothold sure  
 Of paths that wind by old abodes of men  
 Who hope at last the churchyard's peace  
 secure,  
 And follow time-worn rules, that them  
 suffice,  
 Learned from their sires, traditionally  
 wise,  
 Careful of honest custom's how and  
 when;  
 His mind, too brave to look on Truth  
 askance,  
 No more those habitudes of faith could  
 share,  
 But, tinged with sweetness of the old  
 Swiss manse,  
 Lingered around them still and fain  
 would spare.  
 Patient to spy a sullen egg for weeks,  
 The enigma of creation to surprise,  
 His truer instinct sought the life that  
 speaks  
 Without a mystery from kindly eyes;  
 In no self-spun cocoon of prudence  
 wound,  
 He by the touch of men was best in-  
 spired,  
 And caught his native greatness at re-  
 bound  
 From generousities itself had fired;  
 Then how the heat through every fibre  
 ran,  
 Felt in the gathering presence of the  
 man,  
 While the apt word and gesture came  
 unbid!  
 Virtues and faults it to one metal  
 wrought,  
 Fined all his blood to thought,  
 And ran the molten man in all he said  
 or did.  
 All Tully's rules and all Quintilian's too  
 He by the light of listening faces knew,  
 And his rapt audience all unconscious  
 lent  
 Their own roused force to make him elo-  
 quent;  
 Persuasion fondled in his look and tone;  
 Our speech (with strangers prudish) he  
 could bring

To find new charm in accents not her  
 own;  
 Her coy constraints and icy hindrances  
 Melted upon his lips to natural ease,  
 As a brook's fetters swell the dance of  
 spring.  
 Nor yet all sweetness: not in vain he  
 wore,  
 Nor in the sheath of ceremony, controlled  
 By velvet courtesy or caution colic,  
 That sword of honest anger prized of old,  
 But, with two-handed wrath,  
 If baseness or pretension crossed his  
 path,  
 Struck once nor needed to strike  
 more.

## 2.

His magic was not far to seek, —  
 He was so human! Whether strong or  
 weak,  
 Far from his kind he neither sank nor  
 soared,  
 But sate an equal guest at every board:  
 No beggar ever felt him condescend,  
 No prince presume; for still himself he  
 bare  
 At manhood's simple level, and where'er  
 He met a stranger, there he left a friend.  
 How large an aspect! nobly unsevere,  
 With freshness round him of Olympian  
 cheer,  
 Like visits of those earthly gods he  
 came;  
 His look, wherever its good-fortune fell,  
 Doubled the feast without a miracle,  
 And on the hearthstone danced a happier  
 flame;  
 Philemon's crabbed vintage grow be-  
 nign;  
 Amphitryon's gold-juice humanized to  
 wine.

## III. 1.

The garrulous memories  
 Gather again from all their far-flown  
 nooks,  
 Singly at first, and then by twos and  
 threes,  
 Then in a throng innumerable, as the  
 rooks  
 Thicken their twilight files  
 Tow'rd Tintern's gray repose of roofless  
 aisles:  
 Once more I see him at the table's head  
 When Saturday her monthly banquet  
 spread

To scholars, poets, wits,  
 All choice, some famous, loving things,  
   not names,  
 And so without a twinge at others'  
   fames;  
 Such company as wisest moods befits,  
 Yet with no pedant blindness to the  
   worth  
   Of undeliberate mirth,  
 Natures benignly mixed of air and  
   earth,  
 Now with the stars and now with equal  
   zest  
 Tracing the eccentric orbit of a jest.

## 2.

I see in vision the warm-lighted hall,  
 The living and the dead I see again,  
 And but my chair is empty; 'mid them  
   all  
 'T is I that seem the dead: they all re-  
   main  
 Immortal, changeless creatures of the  
   brain:  
 Wellnigh I doubt which world is real  
   most,  
 Of sense or spirit, to the truly sane;  
 In this abstraction it were light to deem  
 Myself the figment of some stronger  
   dream;  
 They are the real things, and I the ghost  
 That glide unhindered through the solid  
   door,  
 Vainly for recognition seek from chair  
   to chair,  
 And strive to speak and am but futile  
   air,  
 As truly most of us are little more.

## 3.

Him most I see whom we most dearly  
   miss,  
   The latest parted thence,  
 His features poised in genial armistice  
 And armed neutrality of self-defence  
 Beneath the forehead's walled præmi-  
   nence,  
 While Tyro, plucking facts with careless  
   reach,  
 Settles off-hand our human how and  
   whence;  
 The long-trained veteran scarcely win-  
   cing hears  
 The infallible strategy of volunteers  
 Making through Nature's walls its easy  
   breach,

And seems to learn where he alone could  
   teach.  
 Ample and ruddy, the board's end he fills  
 As he our fireside were, our light and  
   heat,  
 Centre where minds diverse and various  
   skills  
 Find their warm nook and stretch un-  
   hampered feet;  
 I see the firm benignity of face,  
 Wide-smiling champaign, without tame-  
   ness sweet,  
 The mass Teutonic toned to Gallic grace,  
 The eyes whose sunshine runs before the  
   lips  
 While Holmes's rockets curve their long  
   ellipse,  
 And burst in seeds of fire that burst  
   again  
   To drop in scintillating rain.

## 4.

There too the face half-rustic, half-  
   divine,  
 Self-poised, sagacious, freaked with  
   humor fine,  
 Of him who taught us not to mow  
   and mope  
 About our fancied selves, but seek  
   our scope  
 In Nature's world and Man's, nor fade  
   to hollow trope,  
 Content with our New World and  
   timely bold  
 To challenge the o'er mastery of the  
   Old;  
 Listening with eyes averse I see him  
   sit  
 Pricked with the cider of the Judge's  
   wit  
 (Ripe-hearted homebrew, fresh and  
   fresh again),  
 While the wise nose's firm-built  
   aquiline  
   Curves sharper to restrain  
 The merriment whose most unruly  
   moods  
 Pass not the dumb laugh learned in  
   listening woods  
   Of silence-shedding pine:  
 Hard by is he whose art's consoling  
   spell  
 Hath given both worlds a whiff of  
   asphodel,  
 His look still vernal 'mid the wintry  
   rins



Of petals that remember, not fore-  
tell,  
The paler primrose of a second spring.

## 5.

And more there are: but other forms  
arise

And seen as clear, albeit with dimmer  
eyes:

First he from sympathy still held apart  
By shrinking over-eagerness of heart,  
Cloud charged with searching fire,  
whose shadow's sweep

Heightened mean things with sense of  
brooding ill,

And brooding in doom familiar field and  
hill, —

New England's poet, soul reserved and  
deep,

November nature with a name of May,  
Whom high o'er Concord plains we  
laid to sleep,

While the orchards mocked us in their  
white array

And building robins wondered at our  
tears,

Snatched in his prime, the shape au-  
gust

That should have stood unbent 'neath  
fourscore years,

The noble head, the eyes of furtive  
trust,

All gone to speechless dust.

And he our passing guest,

Shy nature, too, and stung with life's  
unrest,

Whom we too briefly had but could  
not hold,

Who brought ripe Oxford's culture to  
our board,

The Past's incalculable hoard,

Mellowed by scutcheoned panes in  
cloisters old,

Seclusions ivy-hushed, and pavements  
sweet

With immemorial lip of musing feet;  
Young head time-tensured smoother  
than a friar's,

Boy face, but grave with answerless  
desires,

Poet in all that poets have of best,  
But foiled with riddles dark and  
cloudy aims,

Who now hath found sure rest,

Not by still Isis or historic Thames,  
Nor by the Charles he tried to love  
with me,

But, not misplaced, by Arno's hal-  
lowed brim,  
Nor scorned by Santa Croce's neigh-  
boring fames,

Haply not mindless, wheresoe'er he  
be,  
Of violets that to-day I scattered over  
him.

He, too, is there,

After the good centurion fitly named,  
Whom learning dulled not, nor con-  
vention tamed,

Shaking with burly mirth his hyacin-  
thine hair,

Our hearty Grecian of Homeric ways,  
Still found the surer friend where least  
he hoped the praise.

## 6.

Yea truly, as the sallowing years  
Fall from us faster, like frost-loosened  
leaves

Pushed by the misty touch of shorten-  
ing days,

And that unwakened winter nears,  
'T is the void chair our surest guest  
receives,

'T is lips long cold that give the warm-  
est kiss,

'T is the lost voice comes oftenest to  
our ears;

We count our rosary by the beads we  
miss:

To me, at least, it seemeth so,  
An exile in the land once found divine,

While my starved fire burns low,  
And homeless winds at the loose case-  
ment whine

Shrill ditties of the snow-roofed Apen-  
nine.

## IV. 1.

Now forth into the darkness all are  
gone,

But memory, still unsated, follows on,  
Retracing step by step our homeward  
walk,

With many a laugh among our serious  
talk,

Across the bridge where, on the dim-  
pling tide,

The long red streamers from the win-  
dows glide,

Or the dim western moon  
Rocks her skiff's image on the broad  
lagoon,

And Boston shows a soft Venetian  
 side  
 In that Arcadian light when roof and  
 tree,  
 Hard prose by daylight, dream in  
 Italy;  
 Or haply in the sky's cold chambers  
 wide  
 Shivered the winter stars, while all be-  
 low,  
 As if an end were come of human ill,  
 The world was wrapt in innocence of  
 snow  
 And the cast-iron bay was blind and  
 still;  
 These were our poetry; in him per-  
 haps  
 Science had barred the gate that lets  
 in dream,  
 And he would rather count the perch  
 and bream  
 Than with the current's idle fancy  
 lapse;  
 And yet he had the poet's open eye  
 That takes a frank delight in all it  
 sees,  
 Nor was earth voiceless, nor the mystic  
 sky,  
 To him the life-long friend of fields  
 and trees:  
 Then came the prose of the suburban  
 street,  
 Its silence deepened by our echoing  
 feet,  
 And converse such as rambling haz-  
 ard finds;  
 Then he who many cities knew and  
 many minds,  
 And men once world-noised, now mere  
 Ossian forms  
 Of misty memory, bade them live anew  
 As when they shared earth's manifold  
 delight,  
 In shape, in gait, in voice, in gesture  
 true,  
 And, with an accent heightening as he  
 warms,  
 Would stop forgetful of the shortening  
 night,  
 Drop my confining arm, and pour pro-  
 fuse  
 Much worldly wisdom kept for others'  
 use,  
 Not for his own, for he was rash and  
 free,  
 His purse or knowledge all men's, like  
 the sea.

Still can I hear his voice's shrilling  
 might  
 (With pauses broken, while the fitful  
 spark  
 He blew more hotly rounded on the  
 dark  
 To hint his features with a Rembrandt  
 light)  
 Call Oken back, or Humboldt, or La-  
 marek,  
 Or Cuvier's taller shade, and many  
 more  
 Whom he had seen, or knew from oth-  
 ers' sight,  
 And make them men to me as ne'er  
 before:  
 Not seldom, as the undeadened fibre  
 stirred  
 Of noble friendships knit beyond the  
 sea,  
 German or French thrust by the lag-  
 ging word,  
 For a good leash of mother-tongues  
 had he.  
 At last, arrived at where our paths di-  
 vide,  
 "Good night!" and, ere the distance  
 grew too wide,  
 "Good night!" again; and now with  
 cheated ear  
 I half hear his who mine shall never  
 hear.

## 2.

Sometimes it seemed as if New Eng-  
 land air  
 For his large lungs too parsimonious  
 were,  
 As if those empty rooms of dogma  
 drear  
 Where the ghost shivers of a faith aus-  
 tere  
 Counting the horns o'er of the Beast,  
 Still scaring those whose faith in it is  
 least,  
 As if those snaps o' th' moral atmos-  
 phere  
 That sharpen all the needles of the  
 East,  
 Had been to him like death,  
 Accustomed to draw Europe's freer  
 breath  
 In a more stable element;  
 Nay, even our landscape, half the year  
 morose,  
 Our practical horizon grimly pent,  
 Our air, sincere of ceremonious haze,

Forcing hard outlines mercilessly  
 close,  
 Our social monotone of level days,  
 Might make our best seem banish-  
 ment ;  
 But it was nothing so ;  
 Haply his instinct might divine,  
 Beneath our drift of puritanic snow,  
 The marvel sensitive and fine  
 Of sanguinaria over-rash to blow  
 And trust its shyness to an air ma-  
 lign ;  
 Well might he prize truth's warranty  
 and pledge  
 in the grim outcrop of our granite  
 edge,  
 Or Hebrew fervor flashing forth at  
 need  
 In the gaunt sons of Calvin's iron  
 breed,  
 As prompt to give as skilled to win  
 and keep ;  
 But, though such intuitions might not  
 cheer,  
 Yet life was good to him, and, there or  
 here,  
 With that sufficing joy, the day was  
 never cheap ;  
 Thereto his mind was its own ample  
 sphere,  
 And, like those buildings great that  
 through the year  
 Carry one temperature, his nature large  
 Made its own climate, nor could any  
 marge  
 Traced by convention stay him from  
 his bent :  
 He had a habitude of mountain air ;  
 He brought wide outlook where he  
 went,  
 And could on sunny uplands dwell  
 Of prospect sweeter than the pastures  
 fair  
 High-hung of viny Neufchâtel ;  
 Nor, surely, did he miss  
 Some pale, imaginary bliss  
 Of earlier sights whose inner landscape  
 still was Swiss.

## V. 1.

I cannot think he wished so soon to  
 die  
 With all his senses full of eager heat,  
 And rosy years that stood expectant by  
 To buckle the winged sandals on their  
 feet,

He that was friends with earth, and  
 all her sweet  
 Took with both hands unsparingly :  
 Truly this life is precious to the root,  
 And good the feel of grass beneath the  
 foot ;  
 To lie in buttercups and clover-bloom,  
 Tenants in common with the bees,  
 And watch the white clouds drift  
 through gulfs of trees,  
 Is better than long waiting in the  
 tomb ;  
 Only once more to feel the coming  
 spring  
 As the birds feel it when it bids them  
 sing,  
 Only once more to see the moon  
 Through leaf-fringed abbey-arches of  
 the elms  
 Curve her mild sickle in the West  
 Sweet with the breath of hay-cocks,  
 were a boon  
 Worth any promise of soothsayer  
 realms  
 Or casual hope of being elsewhere  
 blest ;  
 To take December by the beard  
 And crush the creaking snow with  
 springy foot,  
 While overhead the North's dumb  
 streamers shoot,  
 Till Winter fawn upon the check en-  
 deared,  
 Then the long evening-ends  
 Lingered by cosy chimney-nooks,  
 With high companionship of books  
 Or slippered talk of friends  
 And sweet habitual looks,  
 Is better than to stop the ears with  
 dust :  
 Too soon the spectre comes to say, "Thou  
 must!"

## 2.

When toil-crooked hands are crost  
 upon the breast,  
 They comfort us with sense of rest ;  
 They must be glad to lie forever still ;  
 Their work is ended with their  
 day ;  
 Another fills their room ; 't is the World's  
 ancient way,  
 Whether for good or ill ;  
 But the deft spinners of the brain,  
 Who love each added day and find it  
 gain,  
 Them overtakes the doom



To snap the half-grown flower upon  
 the loom  
 (Trophy that was to be of life-long  
 pain),  
 The thread no other skill can ever  
 knit again.  
 'T was so with him, for he was glad  
 to live,  
 'T was doubly so, for he left work  
 begun ;  
 Could not this eagerness of Fate for-  
 give  
 Till all the allotted flax were spun ?  
 It matters not ; for, go at night or  
 noon,  
 A friend, when'er he dies, has died  
 too soon,  
 And, once we hear the hopeless *He is*  
*dead*,  
 So far as flesh hath knowledge, all is  
 said.

## VI. 1.

I seem to see the black procession go :  
 That crawling prose of death too well  
 I know,  
 The vulgar paraphrase of glorious  
 woe ;  
 I see it wind through that unsightly  
 grove,  
 Once beautiful, but long defaced  
 With granite permanence of cockney  
 taste  
 And all those grim disfigurements we  
 love :  
 There, then, we leave him : Him ?  
 such costly waste  
 Nature rebels at : and it is not true  
 Of those most precious parts of him we  
 knew :  
 Could we be conscious but as dreamers  
 be,  
 'T were sweet to leave this shifting life  
 of tents  
 Sunk in the changeless calm of Deity ;  
 Nay, to be mingled with the elements,  
 The fellow-servant of creative powers,  
 Partaker in the solemn year's events,  
 To share the work of busy-fingered  
 hours,  
 To be night's silent almoner of dew,  
 To rise again in plants and breathe  
 and grow,  
 To stream as tides the ocean caverns  
 through,  
 Or with the rapture of great winds to  
 blow

About earth's shaken cognes, were  
 not a fate  
 To leave us all-disconsolate ;  
 Even endless slumber in the sweetening  
 sod  
 Of charitable earth  
 That takes out all our mortal stains,  
 And makes us cleanlier neighbors of  
 the clod,  
 Methinks were better worth  
 Than the poor fruit of most men's wake-  
 ful pains,  
 The heart's insatiable ache :  
 But such was not his faith,  
 Nor mine : it may be he had trod  
 Outside the plain old path of *God thus*  
*spake*,  
 But God to him was very God,  
 And not a visionary wraith  
 Skulking in murky corners of the  
 mind,  
 And he was sure to be  
 Somehow, somewhere, imperishable as  
 He,  
 Not with His essence mystically com-  
 bined,  
 As some high spirits long, but whole and  
 free,  
 A perfected and conscious Agassiz.  
 And such I figure him : the wise of old  
 Welcome and own him of their peaceful  
 fold,  
 Not truly with the guild enrolled  
 Of him who seeking inward guessed  
 Diviner riddles than the rest,  
 And groping in the darks of thought  
 Touched the Great Hand and knew it  
 not ;  
 Rather he shares the daily light,  
 From reason's charier fountains won,  
 Of his great chief, the slow-paced Stagy-  
 rite,  
 And Cuvier clasps once more his long-  
 lost son.

## 2.

The shape erect is prone : forever stilled  
 The winning tongue ; the forehead's high-  
 piled heap,  
 A cairn which every science helped to  
 build,  
 Unvalued will its golden secrets keep :  
 He knows at last if Life or Death be  
 best :  
 Wherever he be flown, whatever vest  
 The being hath put on which lately  
 here

So many-friended was, so full of cheer  
To make men feel the Seeker's noble  
zest,

We have not lost him all; he is not  
gone

To the dumb herd of them that wholly  
die;

The beauty of his better self lives on  
In minds he touched with fire, in many  
an eye

He trained to Truth's exact severity;  
He was a Teacher: why be grieved for  
him

Whose living word still stimulates the  
air?

In endless file shall loving scholars come  
The glow of his transmitted touch to  
share,

Aud trace his features with an eye less  
dim

Than ours whose sense familiar wont  
makes numb.

FLORENCE, ITALY, February, 1874.

### TO HOLMES

#### ON HIS SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY.

DEAR Wendell, why need count the  
years

Since first your genius made me thrill,  
If what moved then to smiles or tears,  
Or both contending, move me still?

What has the Calendar to do  
With poets? What Time's fruitless  
tooth

With gay immortals such as you  
Whose years but emphasize your  
youth?

One air gave both their lease of breath;  
The same paths lured our boyish feet;  
One earth will hold us safe in death,  
With dust of saints and scholars sweet.

Our legends from one source were  
drawn,

I scarce distinguish yours from mine,  
And *don't* we make the Gentiles yawn  
With "You remembers?" o'er our  
wine!

If I, with too senescent air,  
Invade your elder memory's pale,

You snub me with a pitying "Where  
Were you in the September Gale?"

Both stared entranced at Lafayette,  
Saw Jackson dubbed with L.L. D.  
What Cambridge saw not strikes us yet  
As scarcely worth one's while to see.

Ten years my senior, when my name  
In Harvard's entrance-book was writ,  
Her halls still echoed with the fame  
Of you, her poet and her wit.

'T is fifty years from then to now:  
But your Last Leaf renews its green,  
Though, for the laurels on your brow  
(So thick they crowd), 't is hardly  
seen.

The oriole's fledglings fifty times  
Have flown from our familiar elms;  
As many poets with their rhymes  
Oblivion's darkling dust o'erwhelms.

The birds are hushed, the poets gone  
Where no harsh critic's lash can  
reach,

And still your winged brood sing on  
To all who love our English speech.

Nay, let the foolish records be  
That make believe you 're seventy-  
five;

You 're the old Wendell still to me, —  
And that 's the youngest man alive.

The gray-blue eyes, I see them still,  
The gallant front with brown o'er-  
hung,

The shape alert, the wit at will,  
The phrase that stuck, but never  
stung.

You keep your youth as yon Scotch firs,  
Whose gaunt line my horizon hems,  
Though twilight all the lowland blurs,  
Hold sunset in their ruddy stems.

You with the elders? Yes, 't is true,  
But in no sadly literal sense,  
With elders and coevals too,  
Whose verb admits no preterite tense

Master alike in speech and song  
Of fame's great antiseptic — Style,  
You with the classic few belong  
Who tempered wisdom with a smile.

Outlive us all! Who else like you  
 Could sift the seedcorn from our chaff,  
 And make us with the pen we knew  
 Deathless at least in epitaph?

WOLLASTON, August 29, 1834.

IN A COPY OF OMAR KHAYYÁM.

THESE pearls of thought in Persian gulfs  
 were bred,  
 Each softly lucent as a rounded moon:  
 The diver Omar plucked them from their  
 bed,  
 Fitzgerald strung them on an English  
 thread.

Fit rosary for a queen, in shape and  
 hue,  
 When Contemplation tells her pensive  
 beads  
 Of mortal thoughts, forever old and  
 new.  
 Fit for a queen? Why, surely then for  
 you!

The moral? Where Doubt's eddies toss  
 and twirl  
 Faith's slender shallop till her footing  
 reel,  
 Plunge: if you find not peace beneath  
 the whirl,  
 Groping, you may like Omar grasp a  
 pearl.

ON RECEIVING A COPY OF MR.  
 AUSTIN DOBSON'S "OLD WORLD  
 ICYLLS."

I.

At length arrived, your book I take  
 To read in for the author's sake:  
 Too gray for new sensations grown,  
 Can charm to Art or Nature known  
 This torpor from my senses shake?

Hush! my parched ears what runnels  
 slake?  
 Is a thrush gurgling from the brake?  
 Has Spring, on all the breezes blown,  
 At length arrived?

Long may you live such songs to make,  
 And I to listen while you wake,  
 With skill of late disused, each tone  
 Of the *Lesboum barbiton*,

At mastery, through long finger-ache,  
 At length arrived.

II.

As I read on, what changes steal  
 O'er me and through, from head to  
 heel?  
 A rapier thrusts coat-skirt aside,  
 My rough Tweeds bloom to silken  
 pride, —  
 Who was it laughed? Your hand, Dick  
 Steele!

Down vistas long of clipt *charmille*  
 Watteau as Pierrot leads the reel;  
 Tabor and pipe the dancers guide  
 As I read on.

While in and out the verses wheel  
 The wind-caught robes trim feet reveal,  
 Lithe ankles that to music glide,  
 But chastely and by chance descried;  
 Art? Nature? Which do I most feel  
 As I read on?

TO C. F. BRADFORD

ON THE GIFT OF A MEERSCHAUM PIPE.

THE pipe came safe, and welcome too,  
 As anything must be from you;  
 A meerschaum pure, 't would float as  
 light  
 As she the girls call Amphitrite.  
 Mixture divine of foam and clay,  
 From both it stole the best away:  
 Its foam is such as crowns the glow  
 Of beakers brimmed by *Veuve Clicquot*;  
 Its clay is but congested lymph  
 Jove chose to make some choicer nymph;  
 And here combined, — why, this must  
 be  
 The birth of some enchanted sea,  
 Shaped to immortal form, the type  
 And very *Venus* of a pipe.

When high I heap it with the weed  
 From *Lethe wharf*, whose potent seed  
*Nicotia*, big from *Bacchus*, bore  
 And cast upon *Virginia's* shore,  
 I'll think, — So fill the fairer bowl  
 And wise alembic of thy soul,  
 With herbs far-sought that shall distil,  
 Not fumes to slacken thought and will,  
 But bracing essences that nerve  
 To wait, to dare, to strive, to serve.



When curls the smoke in eddies soft,  
And hangs a shifting dream aloft,  
That gives and takes, though chance-  
designed,

The impress of the dreamer's mind,  
I'll think, — So let the vapors bred  
By Passion, in the heart or head,  
Pass off and upward into space,  
Waving farewells of tenderest grace,  
Remembered in some happier time,  
To blend their beauty with my rhyme.

While slowly o'er its candid bow  
The color deepens (as the soul  
That burns in mortals leaves its trace  
Of hale or beauty on the face),  
I'll think, — So let the essence rare  
Of years consuming make me fair;  
So, 'gainst the ills of life profuse,  
Steep me in some narcotic juice;  
And if my soul must part with all  
That whiteness which we greenness call,  
Smooth back, O Fortune, halt thy frown,  
And make me beautifully brown!

Dream-forg'er, I refill thy cup  
With reverie's wasteful pittance up,  
And while the fire burns slow away,  
Hiding itself in ashes gray,  
I'll think, — As inward Youth retreats,  
Compelled to spare his wasting heats,  
When Life's Ash-Wednesday comes  
about,  
And my head's gray with fires burnt  
out,  
While stays one spark to light the eye,  
With the last flash of memory,  
'T will leap to welcome C. F. B.,  
Who sent my favorite pipe to me.

## BANKSIDE.

(HOME OF EDMUND QUINCY.)

DEDHAM, MAY 21, 1877.

## I.

I CHRISTENED you in happier days,  
before  
These gray forebodings on my brow were  
seen;  
You are still lovely in your new-leaved  
green;  
The brimming river soothes his grassy  
shore;

The bridge is there; the rock with  
lichens hoar;  
And the same shadows on the water  
lean,  
Outlasting us. How many graves be-  
tween  
That day and this! How many shadows  
more  
Darken my heart, their substance from  
these eyes  
Hidden forever! So our world is made  
Of life and death commingled; and the  
sighs  
Outweigh the smiles, in equal balance  
laid:  
What compensation? None, save that  
the Allwise  
So schools us to love things that cannot  
fade.

## II.

Thank God, he saw you last in pomp of  
May,  
Ere any leaf had felt the year's regret;  
Your latest image in his memory set  
Was fair as when your landscap's  
peaceful sway  
Charmed dearer eyes with his to make  
delay  
On Hope's long prospect, — as if They  
forget  
The happy, They, the unspeakable  
Three, whose debt,  
Like the hawk's shadow, blots our  
brightest day:  
Better it is that ye should look so fair,  
Slopes that he loved, and ever-murmur-  
ing pines  
That make a music out of silent air,  
And bloom-heaped orchard-trees in pros-  
perous lines;  
In you the heart some sweeter hints di-  
vines,  
And wiser, than in winter's dull despair.

## III.

Old Friend, farewell! Your kindly door  
again  
I enter, but the master's hand in mine  
No more clasps welcome, and the tem-  
perate wine,  
That cheered our long nights, other lips  
must stain:  
All is unchanged, but I expect in vain  
The face alert, the manners free and  
fine,

The seventy years borne lightly as the  
 pine  
 Wears its first down of snow in green  
 disdain :  
 Much did he, and much well ; yet most  
 of all  
 I prized his skill in leisure and the ease  
 Of a life flowing full without a plan ;  
 For most are idly busy ; him I call  
 Thrice fortunate who knew himself to  
 please,  
 Learned in those arts that make a gentle-  
 man.

## IV.

Nor deem he lived unto himself alone ;  
 His was the public spirit of his sire,  
 And in those eyes, soft with domestic fire,  
 A quenchless light of fiercer temper shone  
 What time about the world our shame  
 was blown  
 On every wind ; his soul would not con-  
 spire  
 With selfish men to soothe the mob's  
 desire,  
 Veiling with garlands Moloch's bloody  
 stone ;  
 The high-bred instincts of a better day  
 Ruled in his blood, when to be citizen  
 Rang Roman yet, and a Free People's  
 sway  
 Was not the exchequer of impoverished  
 men,  
 Nor statesmanship with loaded votes to  
 play,  
 Nor public office a tramps' boosing-ken.

JOSEPH WINLOCK.

DIED JUNE 11, 1875.

SHY soul and stalwart, man of patient will  
 Through years one hair's-breadth on our  
 Dark to gain,  
 Who, from the stars he studied not in vain,  
 Had learned their secret to be strong  
 and still,  
 Careless of fames that earth's tin trum-  
 pets fill ;  
 Born under Leo, broad of build and brain,  
 While others slept, he watched in that  
 hushed fane  
 Of Science, only witness of his skill :  
 Sudden as falls a shooting-star he fell,  
 But inextinguishable his luminous trace  
 In mind and heart of all that knew him  
 well.

Happy man's doom ! To him the Fates  
 were known  
 Of orbs dim hovering on the skirts of  
 space,  
 Unprescient, through God's mercy, of his  
 own !

## SONNET.

TO FANNY ALEXANDER.

UNCONSCIOUS as the sunshine, simply  
 sweet  
 And generous as that, thou dost not close  
 Thyself in art, as life were but a rose  
 To rumple bee-like with luxurious feet ;  
 Thy higher mind therein finds sure  
 retreat,  
 But not from care of common hopes' and  
 woes ;  
 Thee the dark chamber, thee the un-  
 friended, knows,  
 Although no babbling crowds thy praise  
 repeat :  
 Consummate artist, who life's landscape  
 bleak  
 Hast brimmed with sun to many a  
 clouded eye,  
 Touched to a brighter hue the beggar's  
 cheek,  
 Hung over orphaned lives a gracious sky,  
 And traced for eyes, that else would  
 vainly seek,  
 Fair pictures of an angel drawing nigh !  
 FLORENCE, 1873.

JEFFRIES WYMAN.

DIED SEPTEMBER 4, 1874.

THE wisest man could ask no more of Fate  
 Than to be simple, modest, manly, true,  
 Safe from the Many, honored by the  
 Few ; .  
 To count as naught in World, or Church,  
 or State,  
 But inwardly in secret to be great ;  
 To feel mysterious Nature ever new ;  
 To touch, if not to grasp, her endless  
 clue,  
 And learn by each discovery how to wait.  
 He widened knowledge and escaped the  
 praise ;  
 He wisely taught, because more wise to  
 learn ;  
 He toiled for Science, not to draw men's  
 gaze,

But for her lore of self-denial stern.  
That such a man could spring from our  
    decays  
Fans the soul's nobler faith until it burn.

TO A FRIEND

WHO GAVE ME A GROUP OF WEEDS  
AND GRASSES, AFTER A DRAWING OF  
DÜRER.

TRUE as the sun's own work, but more  
    refined,  
It tells of love behind the artist's eye,  
Of sweet companionships with earth and  
    sky,  
And summers stored, the sunshine of the  
    mind.  
What peace! Sure, ere you breathe,  
    the fickle wind  
Will break its truce and bend that grass-  
    plume high,  
Scarcely yet quiet from the gilded fly  
That flits a more luxurious perch to find.  
Thanks for a pleasure that can never  
    pall,  
A serene moment, deftly caught and kept  
To make immortal summer on my wall.  
Had he who drew such gladness ever  
    wept?  
Ask rather could he else have seen at all,  
Or grown in Nature's mysteries an  
    adept?

WITH AN ARMCHAIR.

1.

ABOUT the oak that framed this chair, of  
    old  
The seasons danced their round; de-  
    lighted wings  
Brought music to its boughs; shy wood-  
    land things  
Shared its broad roof, 'neath whose green  
    glooms grown bold,  
Lovers, more shy than they, their secret  
    told;  
The resurrection of a thousand springs  
Swelled in its veins, and dim imaginings  
Teased them, perchance, of life more  
    manifest.  
Such shall it know when its proud arms  
    enclose  
My Lady Goshawk, musing here at rest,  
Careless of him who into exile goes,

Yet, while his gift by those fair limbs is  
    prest,  
Through some fine sympathy of nature  
    knows  
That, seas between us, she is still his  
    guest.

2.

Yet sometimes, let me dream, the con-  
    scious wood  
A momentary vision may renew  
Of him who counts it treasure that he  
    knew,  
Though but in passing, such a priceless  
    good,  
And, like an elder brother, felt his  
    mood  
Uplifted by the spell that kept her true,  
Amid her lightsome compeers, to the  
    few  
That wear the crown of serious woman-  
    hood:  
Were he so happy, think of him as one  
Who in the Louvre or Pitti feels his  
    soul  
Rapt by some dead face which, till then  
    unseen,  
Moves like a memory and, till life out-  
    run,  
Is vexed with vague misgiving, past con-  
    trol,  
Of nameless loss and thwarted might-  
    have-been.

E. G. DE R.

WHY should I seek her spell to decom-  
    pose  
Or to its source each rill of influence  
    trace  
That feeds the brimming river of her  
    grace?  
The petals numbered but degrade to  
    prose  
Summer's triumphant poem of the rose:  
Enough for me to watch the wavering  
    chase,  
Like wind o'er grass, of moods across  
    her face,  
Fairest in motion, fairer in repose.  
Steeped in her sunshine, let me, while I  
    may,  
Partake the bounty: ample 't is for me  
That her mirth cheats my temples of  
    their gray,  
Her charm makes years long spent seem  
    yet to be.



Wit, goodness, grace, swift flash from  
grave to gay, —  
All these are good, but better far is she.

## BON VOYAGE!

SHIP, o!est to bear such freight across the  
blue,  
May stormless stars control thy horo-  
scope;  
In keel and hull, in every spar and rope,  
Be night and day to thy dear office true!  
Ocean, men's path and their divider too,  
No fairer shrine of memory and hope  
To the underworld adown thy westering  
slope  
E'er vanished, or whom such regrets  
pursue:  
Smooth all thy surges as when Jove to  
Crete  
Swam with less costly burthen, and pre-  
pare  
A pathway meet for her home-coming  
soon  
With golden undulations such as greet  
The printless summer-sandals of the  
moon  
And tempt the Nautilus his cruise to  
dare!

## TO WHITTIER.

## ON HIS SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY.

NEW ENGLAND'S poet, rich in love as  
years,  
Her hills and valleys praise thee, her  
swift brooks  
Dance in thy verse; to her grave sylvan  
nooks  
Thy steps allure us, which the wood-  
thrush hears  
As maids their lovers', and no treason  
fears;  
Through thee her Merrimacs and Agio-  
chooks  
And many a name uncouth win gracious  
looks,  
Sweetly familiar to both Englands' ears:  
Peaceful by birthright as a virgin lake,  
The lily's anchorage, which no eyes  
behold  
Save those of stars, yet for thy brother's  
sake  
That lay in bonds, thou blewst a blast as  
bold

As that wherewith the heart of Roland  
brake,  
Far heard across the New World and the  
Old.

ON AN AUTUMN SKETCH OF H. G.  
WILD.

THANKS to the artist, ever on my wall  
The sunset stays: that hill in glory  
rolled,  
Those trees and clouds in crimson and  
in gold,  
Burn on, nor cool when evening's  
shadows fall.  
Not round *these* splendors Midnight  
wraps her pall;  
*These* leaves the flush of Autumn's vin-  
tage hold  
In Winter's spite, nor can the Northwind  
bold  
Deface my chapel's western window  
small:  
On one, ah me! October struck his frost,  
But not repaid him with those Tyrian  
hues;  
His naked boughs but tell him what is  
lost,  
And parting comforts of the sun refuse:  
His heaven is bare, — ah, were its hollow  
cross  
Even with a cloud whose light were yet  
to lose!

April, 1854.

## TO MISS D. T.

ON HER GIVING ME A DRAWING OF  
LITTLE STREET ARABS.

As, cleansed of Tiber's and Oblivion's  
slime,  
Glow Farnesina's vaults with shapet  
again  
That dreamed some exiled artist from  
his pain  
Back to his Athens and the Muse's  
clime,  
So these world-orphaned waifs of War  
and Crime,  
Purged by Art's absolution from the  
stain  
Of the polluting city-flood, regain  
Ideal grace secure from taint of time.  
An Attic frieze you give, a pictured  
song;

For as with words the poet paints, for you  
The happy pencil at its labor sings,  
Stealing his privilege, nor does him  
wrong,  
Beneath the false discovering the true,  
And Beauty's best in unregarded things.

WITH A COPY OF AUCASSIN AND  
NICOLETE.

LEAVES fit to have been poor Juliet's  
cradle-rhyme,  
With gladness of a heart long quenched  
in mould  
They vibrate still, a nest not yet grown  
cold  
From its fledged burthen. The numb  
hand of time  
Vainly his glass turns; here is endless  
prime;  
Here lips their roses keep and locks their  
gold;  
Here Love in pristine innocence bold  
Speaks what our grosser conscience  
makes a crime.  
Because it tells the dream that all have  
known  
Once in their lives, and to life's end the  
few;  
Because its seeds o'er Memory's desert  
blown  
Spring up in heartsease such as Eden  
knew;  
Because it hath a beauty all its own,  
Dear Friend, I plucked this herb of grace  
for you.

ON PLANTING A TREE AT IN-  
VERARAY.

Who does his duty is a question  
Too complex to be solved by me,  
But he, I venture the suggestion,  
Does part of his that plants a tree.

For after he is dead and buried,  
And epitaphed, and well forgot,  
Nay, even his shade by Charon ferried  
To — let us not inquire to what,

His deed, its author long outliving,  
By Nature's mother-care increased,  
Shall stand, his verdant almoner, giv-  
ing

▲ kindly dole to man and beast.

The wayfarer, at noon reposing,  
Shall bless its shadow on the grass,  
Or sheep beneath its huddle, dozing  
Until the thundergust o'erpass.

The owl, belated in his plundering,  
Shall here await the friendly night,  
Blinking whene'er he wakes, and won-  
dering  
What fool it was invented light.

Hither the busy birds shall flutter,  
With the light timber for their nests,  
And, pausing from their labor, utter  
The morning sunshine in their breasts.

What though his memory shall have  
vanished,  
Since the good deed he did survives?  
It is not wholly to be banished  
Thus to be part of many lives.

Grow, then, my foster-child, and  
strengthen,  
Bough over bough, a murmurous pile,  
And as your stately stem shall lengthen,  
So may the statelier of Argyll!

1880.

AN EPISTLE TO GEORGE WILLIAM  
CURTIS.

“De prodome,  
Des qu'il s'atorne a grant bonte  
Ja n'iert tot dit ne tot conte,  
Que leingue ne puet pas retraire  
Tant d'enor com prodom set faire.”

CRESTIEN DE TROIES,  
*Li Romans dou Chevalier au Lyon*, 784-788.

1874.

CURTIS, whose Wit, with Fancy arm in  
arm,  
Masks half its muscle in its skill to  
charm,  
And who so gently can the Wrong expose  
As sometimes to make converts, never  
foes,  
Or only such as good men must expect,  
Knives sore with conscience of their own  
defect,  
I come with mild remonstrance. Ere I  
start,  
A kindlier errand interrupts my heart,  
And I must utter, though it vex you  
ears,  
The love, the honor, felt so many years.

Curtis, skilled equally with voice and  
 pen  
 To stir the hearts or mould the minds  
 of men, —  
 That voice whose music, for I've heard  
 you sing  
 Sweet as Casella, can with passion ring,  
 That pen whose rapid ease ne'er trips  
 with haste,  
 Nor scrapes nor sputters, pointed with  
 good taste,  
 First Steele's, then Goldsmith's, next it  
 came to you,  
 Whom Thackeray rated best of all our  
 crew, —  
 Had letters kept you, every wreath were  
 yours;  
 Had the World tempted, all its chariest  
 doors  
 Had swung on flattered hinges to admit  
 Such high-bred manners, such good-na-  
 tured wit;  
 At courts, in senates, who so fit to  
 serve?  
 And both invited, but you would not  
 swerve,  
 All meaner prizes waiving that you  
 might  
 In civic duty spend your heat and light,  
 Unpaid, untrammelled, with a sweet  
 disdain  
 Refusing posts men grovel to attain.  
 Good Man all own you; what is left me,  
 then,  
 To heighten praise with but Good  
 Citizen?

But why this praise to make you blush  
 and stare,  
 And give a backache to your Easy-  
 Chair?  
 Old Crestien rightly says no language  
 can  
 Express the worth of a true Gentleman,  
 And I agree; but other thoughts deride  
 My first intent, and lure my pen aside.  
 Thinking of you, I see my firelight glow  
 On other faces, loved from long ago,  
 Dear to us both, and all these loves  
 combine  
 With this I send and crowd in every  
 line;  
 Fortune with me was in such generous  
 mood  
 That all my friends were yours, and all  
 were good;  
 Three generations come where one I call,

And the fair grandame, youngest of  
 them all,  
 In her own Florida who found and sips  
 The fount that fled from Ponce's long-  
 ing lips.  
 How bright they rise and wreath my  
 hearthstone round,  
 Divine my thoughts, reply without a  
 sound,  
 And with them many a shape that mem-  
 ory sees,  
 As dear as they, but crowned with au-  
 reoles these!  
 What wonder if, with protest in my  
 thought,  
 Arrived, I find 't was only love I  
 brought?  
 I came with protest; Memory barred the  
 road  
 Till I repaid you half the debt I owed.

No, 't was not to bring laurels that I  
 came,  
 Nor would you wish it, daily seeing  
 fame,  
 (Or our cheap substitute, unknown of  
 yore.)  
 Dumped like a load of coal at every  
 door,  
 Mime and hetæra getting equal weight  
 With him whose toils heroic saved the  
 State.  
 But praise can harm not who so calmly  
 met  
 Slander's worst word, nor treasured up  
 the debt,  
 Knowing, what all experience serves to  
 show,  
 No mud can soil us but the mud we  
 throw.  
 You have heard harsher voices and  
 more loud,  
 As all must, not sworn liegemen of the  
 crowd,  
 And far aloof your silent mind could  
 keep  
 As when, in heavens with winter-mid-  
 night deep,  
 The perfect moon hangs thoughtful, nor  
 can know  
 What hounds her lucent calm drives mad  
 below.

But to my business, while you rub your  
 eyes  
 And wonder how you ever thought me  
 wise.



Dear friend and old, they say you shake  
 your head  
 And wish some bitter words of mine un-  
 said :  
 I wish they might be, — there we are  
 agreed ;  
 I hate to speak, still more what makes  
 the need ;  
 But I must utter what the voice within  
 Dictates, for acquiescence dumb were sin ;  
 I blurt ungrateful truths, if so they be,  
 That none may need to say them after me.  
 'T were my felicity could I attain  
 The temperate zeal that balances your  
 brain ;  
 But nature still o'erleaps reflection's  
 plan,  
 And one must do his service as he can.  
 Think you it were not pleasanter to  
 speak  
 Smooth words that leave unflushed the  
 brow and cheek ?  
 To sit, well-dined, with cynic smile, un-  
 seen  
 In private box, spectator of the scene  
 Where men the comedy of life rehearse,  
 Idly to judge which better and which  
 worse  
 Each hireling actor spoiled his worth-  
 less part ?  
 Were it not sweeter with a careless heart,  
 In happy commune with the untainted  
 brooks,  
 To dream all day, or, walled with silent  
 books,  
 To hear nor heed the World's unmeaning  
 noise,  
 Safe in my fortress stored with lifelong  
 joys ?  
  
 I love too well the pleasures of retreat  
 Safe from the crowd and cloistered from  
 the street ;  
 The fire that whispers its domestic joy,  
 Flickering on walls that knew me still a  
 boy,  
 And knew my saintly father ; the full  
 days,  
 Not careworn from the world's soul-  
 squandering ways,  
 Calm days that loiter with snow-silent  
 tread,  
 Nor break my commune with the undy-  
 ing dead ;  
 Truants of Time, to-morrow like to-day,  
 That come unbid, and claimless glide  
 away

By shelves that sun them in the indul-  
 gent Past,  
 Where Spanish castles, even, were built  
 to last,  
 Where saint and sage their silent vigil  
 keep,  
 And wrong hath ceased or sung itself to  
 sleep.  
 Dear were my walks, too, gathering fra-  
 grant store  
 Of Mother Nature's simple-minded lore :  
 I learned all weather-signs of day or  
 night ;  
 No bird but I could name him by his  
 flight,  
 No distant tree but by his shape was  
 known,  
 Or, near at hand, by leaf or bark alone.  
 This learning won by loving looks I  
 hived  
 As sweeter lore than all from books de-  
 rived.  
 I know the charm of hillside, field, and  
 wood,  
 Of lake and stream, and the sky's downy  
 brood,  
 Of roads sequestered rimmed with willow  
 sod,  
 But friends with hardhack, aster, golden-  
 rod,  
 Or succory keeping summer long its trust  
 Of heaven-blue fleckless from the eddy-  
 ing dust :  
 These were my earliest friends, and latest  
 too,  
 Still unestranged, whatever fate may do.  
 For years I had these treasures, knew  
 their worth,  
 Estate most real man can have on earth.  
 I sank too deep in this soft-stuffed repose  
 That hears but rumors of earth's wrongs  
 and woes ;  
 Too well these Capuas could my muscles  
 waste,  
 Not void of toils, but toils of choice and  
 taste ;  
 These still had kept me could I but have  
 quelled  
 The Puritan drop that in my veins re-  
 belled.  
 But there were times when silent were  
 my books  
 As jailers are, and gave me sullen looks,  
 When verses palled, and even the wood-  
 land path,  
 By innocent contrast, fed my heart with  
 wrath,

And I must twist my little gift of words  
Into a scourge of rough and knotted  
cords

Unmusical, that whistle as they swing  
To leave on shameless backs their purple  
sting.

How slow Time comes! Gone, who so  
swift as he?

Add but a year, 't is half a century  
Since the slave's stifled moaning broke  
my sleep,

Heard 'gainst my will in that seclusion  
deep,

Haply heard louder for the silence there,  
And so my fancied safeguard made my  
snare.

After that moan had sharpened to a  
cry,

And the cloud, hand-broad then, heaped  
all our sky

With its stored vengeance, and such  
thunders stirred

As heaven's and earth's remotest cham-  
bers heard,

I looked to see an ampler atmosphere  
By that electric passion-gust blown clear.

I looked for this; consider what I see—  
But I forbear, 't would please nor you  
nor me

To check the items in the bitter list  
Of all I counted on and all I mist.

Only three instances I choose from all,  
And each enough to stir a pigeon's gall:

Office a fund for ballot-brokers made  
To pay the drudges of their gainful  
trade;

Our cities taught what conquered cities  
feel

By ædiles chosen that they might safely  
steal;

And gold, however got, a title fair  
To such respect as only gold can bear.

I seem to see this; how shall I gainsay  
What all our journals tell me every  
day?

Poured our young martyrs their high-  
hearted blood

That we might trample to congenial  
mud

The soil with such a legacy sublimed?  
Methinks an angry scorn is here well-  
timed:

Where find retreat? How keep reproach  
at bay?

Where'er I turn some scandal fouls the  
way.

Dear friend, if any man I wished to  
please,

'T were surely you whose humor's honied  
ease

Flows flecked with gold of thought,  
whose generous mind

Sees Paradise regained by all mankind,  
Whose brave example still to vanward  
shines,

Checks the retreat, and spurs our lagging  
lines.

Was I too bitter? Who his phrase can  
choose

That sees the life-blood of his dearest  
ooze?

I loved my Country so as only they  
Who love a mother fit to die for may;

I loved her old renown, her stainless  
fame,—

What better proof than that I loathed  
her shame?

That many blamed me could not irk me  
long,

But, if you doubted, must I not be  
wrong?

'T is not for me to answer: this I know,  
That man or race so prosperously low

Sunk in success that wrath they cannot  
feel,

Shall taste the spurn of parting Fortune's  
heel;

For never land long lease of empire won  
Whose sons sate silent when base deeds  
were done.

#### POSTSCRIPT, 1887.

Curtis, so wrote I thirteen years ago,  
Tost it unfinished by, and left it so;

Found lately, I have pieced it out, or  
tried,

Since time for callid juncture was denied.  
Some of the verses pleased me, it is true,

And still were pertinent,—those honor-  
ing you.

These now I offer: take them, if you  
will,

Like the old hand-grasp, when at Shady  
Hill

We met, or Staten Island, in the days  
When life was its own spur, nor needed  
praise.

If once you thought me rash, no longer  
fear;

Past my next milestone waits my seven-  
tieth year.

**I** mount no longer when the trumpets  
 call ;  
**My** battle-harness idles on the wall,  
**The** spider's castle, camping-ground of  
 dust,  
**Not** without dints, and all in front, I  
 trust.  
**Shivering** sometimes it calls me as it  
 hears  
**Afar** the charge's tramp and clash of  
 spears ;  
**But** 't is such murmur only as might be  
**The** sea-shell's lost tradition of the sea,  
**That** makes me muse and wonder  
 Where ? and When ?  
**While** from my cliff I watch the waves  
 of men  
**That** climb to break midway their seem-  
 ing gain,  
**And** think it triumph if they shake their  
 chain.  
**Little** I ask of Fate ; will she refuse  
**Some** days of reconcilment with the  
 Muse ?  
**I** take my reed again and blow it free  
**Of** dusty silence, murmuring, " Sing to  
 me !"  
**And,** as its stops my curious touch re-  
 tries,  
**The** stir of earlier instincts I surprise, —  
**Instincts,** if less imperious, yet more  
 strong,  
**And** happy in the toil that ends with  
 song.  
  
**Home** am I come : not, as I hoped might  
 be,  
**To** the old haunts, too full of ghosts for  
 me,  
**But** to the olden dreams that time en-  
 dears,  
**And** the loved books that younger grow  
 with years ;  
**To** country rambles, timing with my  
 tread  
 Some happier verse that carols in my  
 head,  
**Yet** all with sense of something vainly  
 mist,  
**Of** something lost, but when I never  
 wist.  
**How** empty seems to me the populous  
 street,  
**One** figure gone I daily loved to meet, —  
**The** clear, sweet singer with the crown  
 of snow  
**Not** whiter than the thoughts that housed  
 below !  
**And,** ah, what absence feel I at my side,  
**Like** Dante when he missed his laurelled  
 guide,  
**What** sense of diminution in the air  
**Once** so inspiring, Emerson not there !  
**But** life is sweet, though all that makes  
 it sweet  
**Lessen** like sound of friends' departing  
 feet,  
**And** Death is beautiful as feet of friend  
**Coming** with welcome at our journey's  
 end ;  
**For** me Fate gave, whate'er she else de-  
 nied,  
**A** nature sloping to the southern side ;  
**I** thank her for it, though when clouds  
 arise  
**Such** natures double-darken gloomy skies.  
**I** muse upon the margin of the sea,  
**Our** common pathway to the new To Be,  
**Watching** the sails, that lessen more and  
 more,  
**Of** good and beautiful embarked before ;  
**With** bits of wreck I patch the boat shall  
 bear  
**Me** to that unexhausted Otherwhere,  
**Whose** friendly-peopled shore I some-  
 times see,  
**By** soft mirage uplifted, beckon me,  
**Nor** sadly hear, as lower sinks the sun,  
**My** moorings to the past snap one by  
 one.



## II. SENTIMENT.

### ENDYMION.

#### MYSTICAL COMMENT ON TITIAN'S "SACRED AND PROFANE LOVE."

##### I.

My day began not till the twilight fell,  
And, lo, in ether from heaven's sweetest  
well,

The New Moon swam divinely isolate  
In maiden silence, she that makes my  
fate

Haply not knowing it, or only so  
As I the secrets of my sheep may know;  
Nor ask I more, entirely blest if she,  
In letting me adore, ennoble me  
To height of what the Gods meant mak-  
ing man,

As only she and her best beauty can.  
Mine be the love that in itself can find  
Seed of white thoughts, the lilies of the  
mind,

Seed of that glad surrender of the will  
That finds in service self's true purpose  
still;

Love that in outward fairness sees the  
tent

Pitched for an inmate far more excel-  
lent;

Love with a light irradiate to the core,  
Lit at her lamp, but fed from inborn  
store;

Love thrice-requited with the single joy  
Of an immaculate vision naught could  
cloy,

Dearer because, so high beyond my  
scope,

My life grew rich with her, unbribed by  
hope

Of other guerdon save to think she knew  
One grateful votary paid her all her  
due;

Happy if she, high-radiant there, resigned

To his sure trust her image in his mind.  
O fairer even than Peace is when she  
comes

Hushing War's tumult, and retreating  
drums

Fade to a murmur like the sough of bees  
Hidden among the noon-stilled linden-  
trees,

Bringer of quiet, thou that canst allay  
The dust and din and travail of the day,  
Strewer of Silence, Giver of the dew  
That doth our pastures and our souls re-  
new,

Still dwell remote, still on thy shoreless  
sea

Float unattained in silent empery,  
Still light my thoughts, nor listen to a  
prayer

Would make thee less imperishably fair!

##### II.

Can, then, my twofold nature find con-  
tent

In vain conceits of airy blandishment?  
Ask I no more? Since yesterday I task

My storm-strewn thoughts to tell me  
what I ask:

Faint premonitions of mutation strange  
Steal o'er my perfect orb, and, with the  
change,

Myself am changed; the shadow of my  
earth

Darkens the disc of that celestial worth  
Which only yesterday could still suffice  
Upwards to waft my thoughts in sacri-  
fice;

My heightened fancy with its touches  
warm

Moulds to a woman's that ideal form;  
Nor yet a woman's wholly, but divine  
With awe her purer essence bred in  
mine.

Was it long brooding on their own sur-  
mise,  
Which, of the eyes engendered, fools the  
eyes,  
Or have I seen through that translucent  
air  
A Presence shaped in its seclusions bare,  
My Goddess looking on me from above  
As look our russet maidens when they  
love,  
But high-uptifted o'er our human heat  
And passion-paths too rough for her  
pearl feet ?

Slowly the Shape took outline as I gazed  
At her full-orbed or crescent, till, be-  
dazed  
With wonder-working light that subtly  
wrought  
My brain to its own substance, steeping  
thought  
In trances such as poppies give, I saw  
Things shut from vision by sight's sober  
law,  
Amorphous, changeful, but defined at  
last  
Into the peerless Shape mine eyes hold  
fast.  
This, too, at first I worshipt: soon, like  
wine,  
Her eyes, in mine poured, frenzy-philtred  
mine;  
Passion put Worship's priestly raiment  
on  
And to the woman knelt, the Goddess  
gone.  
Was I, then, more than mortal made ? or  
she  
Less than divine that she might mate  
with me ?  
If mortal merely, could my nature cope  
With such o'er mastery of maddening  
hope ?  
If Goddess, could she feel the blissful  
woe  
That women in their self-surrender  
know ?

## III.

Long she abode aloof there in her  
heaven,  
Far as the grape-bunch of the Pleiad  
seven  
Beyond my madness' utmost leap; but  
here  
Mine eyes have feigned of late her rap-  
ture near,

Moulded of mind-mist that broad day  
dispels,  
Here in these shadowy woods and brook-  
lulled dells.

Have no heaven-habitants e'er felt a void  
In hearts sublimed with ichor unal-  
loyed ?  
E'er longed to mingle with a mortal fate  
Intense with pathos of its briefer date ?  
Could she partake, and live, our human  
stains ?  
Even with the thought there tingles  
through my veins  
Sense of unwarned renewal ; I, the dead,  
Receive and house again the ardor fled,  
As once Alcestis ; to the ruddy brim  
Feel masculine virtue flooding every limb,  
And life, like Spring returning, brings  
the key  
That sets my senses from their winter  
free,  
Dancing like naked fauns too glad for  
shame.  
Her passion, purified 'o palest flame,  
Can it thus kindle ? Is her purpose this ?  
I will not argue, lest I lose a bliss  
That makes me dream Tithonus' fortune  
mine,  
(Or what of it was palpably divine  
Ere came the fruitlessly immortal gift ; )  
Ere can curb my hope's imperious drift  
That wings with fire my dull mortality ;  
Though fancy-forged, 't is all I feel or see.

## IV.

My Goddess sinks ; round Latmos' dark-  
ening brow  
Trembles the parting of her presence  
now,  
Faint as the perfume left upon the grass  
By her limbs' pressure or her feet that  
pass  
By me conjectured, but conjectured so  
As things I touch far fainter substance  
show.  
Was it mine eyes' imposture I have seen  
Flit with the moonbeams on from shade  
to sheen  
Through the wood-openings ? Nay, I  
see her now  
Out of her heaven new-lighted, from her  
brow  
The hair breeze-scattered, like loose  
mists that blow  
Across her crescent, goldening as they  
go,

High-kirtled for the chase, and what was  
 shown,  
 Of maiden roudure, like the rose half-  
 blown.  
 If dream, turn real! If a vision, stay!  
 Take mortal shape, my philtre's spell  
 obey!  
 If hags compel thee from thy secret sky  
 With gruesome incantations, why not I,  
 Whose only magic is that I distil  
 A potion, blent of passion, thought, and  
 will,  
 Deeper in reach, in force of fate more  
 rich,  
 Than e'er was juice wrung by Thessalian  
 witch  
 From moon-enchanted herbs, — a potion  
 brewed  
 Of my best life in each diviner mood?  
 Myself the elixir am, myself the bowl  
 Seething and mantling with my soul of  
 soul.  
 Taste and be humanized: what though  
 the cup,  
 With thy lips frenzied, shatter? Drink  
 it up!  
 If but these arms may clasp, o'erquited so,  
 My world, thy heaven, all life means I  
 shall know.

## v.

Sure she hath heard my prayer and  
 granted half,  
 As Gods do who at mortal madness laugh.  
 Yet if life's solid things illusion seem,  
 Why may not substance wear the mask  
 of dream?  
 In sleep she comes; she visits me in  
 dreams,  
 And, as her image in a thousand streams,  
 So in my veins, that her obey, she sees,  
 Floating and flaming there, her images  
 Bear to my little world's remotest zone  
 Glad messages of her, and her alone.  
 With silence-sandalled Sleep she comes  
 to me,  
 (But softer-footed, sweeter-browed, than  
 she,)  
 In motion gracious as a seagull's wing,  
 And all her bright limbs, moving, seem  
 to sing.  
 Let me believe so, then, if so I may  
 With the night's bounty feed my beg-  
 gared day.  
 In dreams I see her lay the goddess down  
 With bow and quiver, and her crescent-  
 crown

Flicker and fade away to dull eclipse  
 As down to mine she deigns her longed-  
 for lips;  
 And as her neck my happy arms en-  
 fold,  
 Flooded and lusted with her loosened  
 gold,  
 She whispers words each sweeter than a  
 kiss:  
 Then, wakened with the shock of sudden  
 bliss,  
 My arms are empty, my awakener fled,  
 And, silent in the silent sky o'erhead,  
 But coldly as on ice-plated snow, she  
 gleams,  
 Herself the mother and the child of  
 dreams.

## VI.

Gone is the time when phantasms could  
 appease  
 My quest phantasmal and bring cheated  
 ease;  
 When, if she glorified my dreams, I felt  
 Through all my limbs a change immortal  
 melt  
 At touch of hers illuminate with soul  
 Not long could I be stilled with Fancy's  
 dole;  
 Too soon the mortal mixture in me  
 caught  
 Red fire from her celestial fame, and  
 fought  
 For tyrannous control in all my veins:  
 My fool's prayer was accepted; what re-  
 mains?  
 Or was it some eidolon merely, sent  
 By her who rules the shades in banish-  
 ment,  
 To mock me with her semblance? Were  
 it thus,  
 How 'scape I shame, whose will was  
 traitorous?  
 What shall compensate an ideal dimmed?  
 How blanch again my statue virgin-  
 limbed,  
 Soiled with the incense-smoke her chosen  
 priest  
 Poured more profusely as within de-  
 creased  
 The fire unearthly, fed with coals from  
 far  
 Within the soul's shrine? Could my  
 fallen star  
 Be set in heaven again by prayers and  
 tears  
 And quenchless sacrifice of all my years,



How would the victim to the flamen  
 leap,  
 And life for life's redemption paid hold  
 cheap!

But what resource when she herself de-  
 scends  
 From her blue throne, and o'er her vas-  
 sal bends  
 That shape thrice-deified by love, those  
 eyes

Wherein the Lethe of all others lies?  
 When my white queen of heaven's re-  
 moteness tires,

Herself against her other self conspires,  
 Takes woman's nature, walks in mortal  
 ways,  
 And finds in my remorse her beauty's  
 praise?

Yet all would I renounce to dream again  
 The dream in dreams fulfilled that made  
 my pain,

My noble pain that heightened all my  
 years

With crowns to win and prowess-breed-  
 ing tears;

Nay, would that dream renounce once  
 more to see

Her from her sky there looking down at  
 me!

## VII.

Goddess, reclimb thy heaven, and be  
 once more

An inaccessible splendor to adore,  
 A faith, a hope of such transcendent  
 worth

As bred ennobling discontent with earth;  
 Give back the longing, back the elated  
 mood

That, fed with thee, spurned every  
 meaner good;

Give even the spur of impotent despair  
 That, without hope, still bade aspire and  
 dare;

Give back the need to worship, that still  
 pours  
 Down to the soul the virtue it adores!

Nay, brightest and most beautiful, deem  
 naught

These frantic words, the reckless wind  
 of thought;

Still stoop, still grant,— I live but in  
 thy will;

Be what thou wilt, but be a woman still!  
 Vainly I cried, nor could myself believe

That what I prayed for I would fain re-  
 ceive.

My moon is set; my vision set with her;  
 No more can worship vain my pulses  
 stir.

Goddess Triform, I own thy triple spell,  
 My heaven's queen, — queen, too, of my  
 earth and hell!

## THE BLACK PREACHER.

## A BRETON LEGEND.

AT Carnac in Brittany, close on the bay,  
 They show you a church, or rather the  
 gray

Ribs of a dead one, left there to bleach  
 With the wreck lying near on the crest  
 of the beach,

Roofless and splintered with thunder-  
 stone,

'Mid lichen-blurred gravestones all  
 alone;

'T is the kind of ruin strange sights to  
 see

That may have their teaching for you  
 and me.

Something like this, then, my guide had  
 to tell,

Perched on a saint cracked across when  
 he fell;

But since I might chance give his mean-  
 ing a wrench,

He talking his *patois* and I English-  
 French,

I'll put what he told me, preserving the  
 tone,

In a rhymed prose that makes it half his,  
 half my own.

An abbey-church stood here, once on a  
 time,

Built as a death-bed atonement for  
 crime:

'T was for somebody's sins, I know not  
 whose;

But sinners are plenty, and you can  
 choose.

Though a cloister now of the dusk-  
 winged bat,

'T was rich enough once, and the  
 brothers grew fat,

Looser in girdle and purpler in jowl,  
 Singing good rest to the founder's lost  
 soul.

But one day came Northmen, and lithe  
tongues of fire  
Lapped up the chapter-house, licked off  
the spire,  
And left all a rubbish-heap, black and  
dreary,  
Where only the wind sings *miserere*.

No priest has kneeled since at the altar's  
foot,  
Whose crannies are searched by the  
nightshade's root,  
Nor sound of service is ever heard,  
Except from throat of the unclean bird,  
Hooting to unsoiled shapes as they  
pass  
In midnights unholy his witches' mass,  
Or shouting "Ho! ho!" from the belfry  
high  
As the Devil's sabbath-train whirls by.

But once a year, on the eve of All-Souls,  
Through these arches dishallowed the  
organ rolls,  
Fingers long fleshless the bell-ropes  
work,  
The chimes peal muffled with sea-mists  
mirk,  
The skeleton windows are traced anew  
On the baleful flicker of corpse-lights  
blue,  
And the ghosts must come, so the legend  
saith,  
To a preaching of Reverend Doctor  
Death.

Abbots, monks, barons, and ladies fair  
Hear the dull summons and gather  
there:  
No rustle of silk now, no clink of mail,  
Nor ever a one greets his church-mate  
pale;  
No knight whispers love in the *châte-  
laine's* ear,  
His next-door neighbor this five hundred  
year;  
No monk has a sleek *benedicite*  
For the great lord shadowy now as he;  
Nor needeth any to hold his breath,  
Lest he lose the least word of Doctor  
Death.

He chooses his text in the Book Divine,  
Tenth verse of the Preacher in chapter  
nine:—  
"Whatsoever thy hand shall find thee  
to do,

That do with thy whole might, or thou  
shalt rue;  
For no man is wealthy, or wise, or  
brave,  
In that quencher of might-be's and  
would-be's, the grave.  
Bid by the Bridegroom, 'To-morrow,'  
ye said,  
And To-morrow was digging a trench  
for your bed;  
Ye said, 'God can wait; let us finish our  
wine;'  
Ye had wearied Him, fools, and that  
last knock was mine!"

But I can't pretend to give you the  
sermon,  
Or say if the tongue were French, Latin,  
or German;  
Whatever he preached in, I give you my  
word  
The meaning was easy to all that heard;  
Famous preachers there have been and  
be,  
But never was one so convincing as he;  
So blunt was never a begging friar,  
No Jesuit's tongue so barbed with fire,  
Cameronian never, nor Methodist,  
Wrung gall out of Scripture with such a  
twist.

And would you know who his hearers  
must be?  
I tell you just what my guide told me:  
Excellent teaching men have, day and  
night,  
From two earnest friars, a black and a  
white,  
The Dominican Death and the Carmelite  
Life;  
And between these two there is never  
strife,  
For each has his separate office and  
station,  
And each his own work in the congrega-  
tion;  
Whoso to the white brother deafens his  
ears,  
And cannot be wrought on by blessings  
or tears,  
Awake in his coffin must wait and wait,  
In that blackness of darkness that means  
*too late*,  
And come once a year, when the ghost-  
bell tolls,  
As till Doomsday it shall on the eve of  
All-Souls,

To hear Doctor Death, whose words  
smart with the brine  
Of the Preacher, the tenth verse of  
chapter nine.

## ARCADIA REDIVIVA.

I, WALKING the familiar street,  
While a crammed horse-car jingled  
through it,  
Was lifted from my prosy feet  
And in Arcadia ere I knew it.

Fresh sward for gravel soothed my tread,  
And shepherd's pipes my ear de-  
lighted;  
The riddle may be lightly read:  
I met two lovers newly lighted.

They murmured by in happy care,  
New plans for paradise devising,  
Just as the moon, with pensive stare,  
O'er Mistress Craigie's pines was  
rising.

Astarte, known nigh threescore years,  
Me to no speechless rapture urges;  
Them in Elysium she enspheres.  
Queen, from of old, of thaumatarges.

The railings put forth bud and bloom,  
The house-fronts all with myrtles twine  
them,  
And light-winged Loves in every room  
Make nests, and then with kisses line  
them.

O sweetness of untasted life!  
O dream, its own supreme fulfilment!  
O hours with all illusion rife,  
As ere the heart divined what ill  
meant!

"*Et ego*," sighed I to myself,  
And strove some vain regrets to bridle,  
"Though now laid dusty on the shelf,  
Was hero once of such an idyl!"

"An idyl ever newly sweet,  
Although since Adam's day recited,  
Whose measures time them to Love's  
feet,  
Whose sense is every ill requited."

Maiden, if I may counsel, drain  
Each drop of this enchanted season,

For even our honeymoons must wane,  
Convicted of green cheese by Reason.

And none will seem so safe from change,  
Nor in such skies benignant hover,  
As this, beneath whose witchery strange  
You tread on rose-leaves with your  
lover.

The glass unfilled all tastes can fit,  
As round its brim Conjecture dances;  
For not Mephisto's self hath wit  
To draw such vintages as Fancy's.

When our pulse beats its minor key,  
When play-time halves and school-  
time doubles,  
Age fills the cup with serious tea,  
Which once Dame Clicquot starred  
with bubbles.

"Fie, Mr. Graybeard! Is this wise?  
Is this the moral of a poet,  
Who, when the plant of Eden dies,  
Is privileged once more to sow it?"

"That herb of clay-disdaining root,  
From stars secreting what it feeds on,  
Is burnt-out passion's slag and soot  
Fit soil to strew its dainty seeds on!"

"Pray, why, if in Arcadia once,  
Need one so soon forget the way there?  
Or why, once there, be such a dunce  
As not contentedly to stay there?"

Dear child, 't was but a sorry jest,  
And from my heart I hate the cynic  
Who makes the Book of Life a nest  
For comments staler than rabbinic.

If Love his simple spell but keep,  
Life with ideal eyes to flatter,  
The Grail itself were crockery cheap  
To Every-day's communion-platter.

One Darby is to me well known,  
Who, as the hearth between them  
blazes,  
Sees the old moonlight shine on Joan,  
And float her youthward in its hazes.

He rubs his spectacles, he stares, —  
'T is the same face that witched him  
early!

He gropes for his remaining hairs, —  
Is this a fleece that feels so curly?



"Good heavens! but now 't was winter  
gray,  
And I of years had more than plenty;  
The almanac 's a fool! 'T is May!  
Hang family Bibles! I am twenty!

"Come, Joan, your arm; we'll walk the  
room —  
The lane, I mean — do you remem-  
ber?  
How confident the roses bloom,  
As if it ne'er could be December!

"Nor more it shall, while in your eyes  
My heart its summer heat recovers,  
And you, howe'er your mirror lies,  
Find your old beauty in your lover's."

## THE NEST.

## MAY.

WHEN oaken woods with buds are pink,  
And new-come birds each morning  
sing,  
When fickle May on Summer's brink  
Pauses, and knows not which to fling,  
Whether fresh bud and bloom again,  
Or hoar-frost silvering hill and plain,

Then from the honeysuckle gray  
The oriole with experienced quest  
Twitches the fibrous bark away,  
The cordage of his hammock-nest,  
Cheering his labor with a note  
Rich as the orange of his throat.

High o'er the loud and dusty road  
The soft gray cup in safety swings,  
To brim ere August with its load  
Of downy breasts and throbbing  
wings,  
O'er which the friendly elm-tree heaves  
An emerald roof with sculptured eaves.

Below, the noisy World drags by  
In the old way, because it must,  
The bride with heartbreak in her eye,  
The mourner following hated dust:  
Thy duty, winged flame of Spring,  
Is but to love, and fly, and sing.

Oh, happy life, to soar and sway  
Above the life by mortals led,  
Singing the merry months away,  
Master, not slave of daily bread,

And, when the Autumn comes, to flee  
Wherever sunshine beckons thee!

## PALINODE. — DECEMBER.

Like some lorn abbey now, the wood  
Stands roofless in the bitter air;  
In ruins on its floor is strewed  
The carven foliage quaint and rare,  
And homeless winds complain along  
The columned choir once thrilled with  
song.

And thou, dear nest, whence joy and  
praise  
The thankful oriole used to pour,  
Swing'st empty while the north winds  
chase  
Their snowy swarms from Labrador:  
But, loyal to the happy past,  
I love thee still for what thou wast.

Ah, when the Summer graces flee  
From other nests more dear than thou,  
And, where June crowded once, I see  
Only bare trunk and disleaved bough;  
When springs of life that gleamed and  
gushed  
Run chilled, and slower, and are hushed;

When our own branches, naked long,  
The vacant nests of Spring betray,  
Nurseries of passion, love, and song  
That vanished as our year grew gray;  
When Life drones o'er a tale twice told  
O'er embers pleading with the cold, —

I'll trust, that, like the birds of Spring,  
Our good goes not without repair,  
But only flies to soar and sing  
Far off in some diviner air,  
Where we shall find it in the calms  
Of that fair garden 'neath the palms.

## A YOUTHFUL EXPERIMENT IN ENGLISH HEXAMETERS.

## IMPRESSIONS OF HOMER.

SOMETIMES come pauses of calm, when  
the rapt bard, holding his heart  
back,  
Over his deep mind muses, as when o'er  
awestricken ocean  
Poises a heapt cloud luridly, ripening  
the gale and the thunder;

Slow rolls onward the verse with a long  
swell heaving and swinging,  
Seeming to wait till, gradually wid'ning  
from far-off horizons,  
Piling the deeps up, heaping the glad-  
hearted surges before it,  
Gathers the thought as a strong wind  
darkening and cresting the tumult.  
Then every pause, every heave, each  
trough in the waves, has its mean-  
ing;  
Full-sailed, forth like a tall ship steadies  
the theme, and around it,  
Leaping beside it in glad strength, run-  
ning in wild glee beyond it  
Harmonies billow exulting and floating  
the soul where it lists them,  
Swaying the listener's fantasy hither and  
thither like driftweed.

## BIRTHDAY VERSES.

WRITTEN IN A CHILD'S ALBUM.

'T WAS sung of old in hut and hall  
How once a king in evil hour  
Hung musing o'er his castle wall,  
And, lost in idle dreams, let fall  
Into the sea his ring of power.

Then, let him sorrow as he might,  
And pledge his daughter and his throne  
To who restored the jewel bright,  
The broken spell would ne'er unite;  
The grim old ocean held its own.

Those awful powers on man that wait,  
On man, the beggar or the king,  
To hovel bare or hall of state  
A magic ring that masters fate  
With each succeeding birthday bring.

Therein are set four jewels rare :  
Pearl winter, summer's ruby blaze,  
Spring's emerald, and, than all more fair,  
Fall's pensive opal, doomed to bear  
A heart of fire bedreamed with haze.

To him the simple spell who knows  
The spirits of the ring to sway,  
Fresh power with every sunrise flows,  
And royal pursuivants are those  
That fly his mandates to obey.

But he that with a slackened will  
Dreams of things past or things to be,

From him the charm is slipping still,  
And drops, ere he suspect the ill,  
Into the inexorable sea.

## ESTRANGEMENT.

THE path from me to you that led,  
Untrodden long, with grass is grown, —  
Mute carpet that his lieges spread  
Before the Prince Oblivion  
When he goes visiting the dead.

And who are they but who forget ?  
You, who my coming could surmise  
Ere any hint of me as yet  
Warned other ears and other eyes,  
See the path blurred without regret.

But when I trace its windings sweet  
With saddened steps, at every spot  
That feels the memory in my feet,  
Each grass-blade turns forget-me-not,  
Where murmuring bees your name  
repeat.

## PHŒBE.

ERE pales in Heaven the morning star,  
A bird, the loneliest of its kind,  
Hears Dawn's faint footfall from afar  
While all its mates are dumb and blind.

It is a wee sad-colored thing,  
As shy and secret as a maid,  
That, ere in choir the robins ring,  
Pipes its own name like one afraid.

It seems pain-prompted to repeat  
The story of some ancient ill,  
But *Phæbe! Phæbe!* sadly sweet  
Is all it says, and then is still.

It calls and listens. Earth and sky,  
Hushed by the pathos of its fate,  
Listen : no whisper of reply  
Comes from its doom-dissevered mate.

*Phæbe!* it calls and calls again,  
And Ovid, could he but have heard,  
Had hung a legendary pain  
About the memory of the bird ;

A pain articulate so long  
In penance of some mouldered crime  
Whose ghost still flies the Furies' throng  
Down the waste solitudes of time.

Waif of the young World's wonder-  
hour,  
When gods found mortal maidens fair,  
And will malign was joined with power  
Love's kindly laws to overbear,

Like Progne, did it feel the stress  
And coil of the prevailing words  
Close round its being, and compress  
Man's ampler nature to a bird's?

One only memory left of all  
The motley crowd of vanished scenes,  
Hers, and vain impulse to recall  
By repetition what it means.

*Phæbe!* is all it has to say  
In plaintive cadence o'er and o'er,  
Like children that have lost their way,  
And know their names, but nothing  
more.

Is it a type, since Nature's Lyre  
Vibrates to every note in man,  
Of that insatiable desire,  
Meant to be so since life began?

I, in strange lands at gray dawn,  
Wakeful, have heard that fruitless plaint  
Through Memory's chambers deep with-  
drawn  
Renew its iterations faint.

So nigh! yet from remotest years  
It summons back its magic, rife  
With longings unappeased, and tears  
Drawn from the very source of life.

#### DAS EWIG-WEIBLICHE.

How was I worthy so divine a loss,  
Deepening my midnights, kindling all  
my morns?  
Why waste such precious wood to make  
my cross,  
Such far-sought roses for my crown of  
thorns?

And when she came, how earned I such  
a gift?  
Why spend on me, a poor earth-delv-  
ing mole,  
The fireside sweetnesss, the heavenward  
lift,  
The hourly mercy, of a woman's  
soul?

Ah, did we know to give her all her  
right,  
What wonders even in our poor clay  
were done!  
It is not Woman leaves us to our night,  
But our brute earth that grovels from  
her sun.

Our nobler cultured fields and gracious  
domes  
We whirl too oft from her who still  
shines on  
To light in vain our caves and clefts, the  
homes  
Of night-bird instincts pained till she  
be gone.

Still must this body starve our souls with  
shade;  
But when Death makes us what we  
were before,  
Then shall her sunshine all our depths  
invade,  
And not a shadow stain heaven's crys-  
tal floor.

#### THE RECALL.

COME back before the birds are flown,  
Before the leaves desert the tree,  
And, through the lonely alleys blown,  
Whisper their vain regrets to me  
Who drive before a blast more rude,  
The plaything of my gusty mood,  
In vain pursuing and pursued!

Nay, come although the boughs be bare,  
Though snowflakes fledge the summer's  
nest,  
And in some far Ausonian air  
The thrush, your minstrel, warm his  
breast.  
Come, sunshine's treasurer, and bring  
To doubting flowers their faith in spring,  
To birds and me the need to sing!

#### ABSENCE.

SLEEP is Death's image, — poets tell us  
so;  
But Absence is the bitter self of Death.  
And, you away, Life's lips their red  
forego,  
Parched in an air unfreshened by your  
breath.



Light of those eyes that made the light  
of mine,  
Where shine you? On what happier  
fields and flowers?  
Heaven's lamps renew their lustre less  
divine,  
But only serve to count my darkened  
hours.

If with your presence went your image  
<sup>100,</sup>  
That brain-born ghost my path would  
never cross  
Which meets me now where'er I once  
met you,  
Then vanishes, to multiply my loss.

MONNA LISA.

SHE gave me all that woman can,  
Nor her soul's nunnery forego,  
A confidence that man to man  
Without remorse can never show.

Rare art, that can the sense refine  
Till not a pulse rebellious stirs,  
And, since she never can be mine,  
Makes it seem sweeter to be hers!

THE OPTIMIST.

TURBID from London's noise and smoke,  
Here I find air and quiet too:  
Air filtered through the beech and  
oak,  
Quiet by nothing harsher broke  
Than wood-dove's meditative coo.

The Truce of God is here: the breeze  
Sighs as men sigh relieved from care,  
Or tilts as lightly in the trees  
As might a robin: all is ease,  
With pledge of ampler ease to spare.

Time, leaning on his scythe, forgets  
To turn the hourglass in his hand,  
And all life's petty cares and frets,  
Its teasing hopes and weak regrets,  
Are still as that oblivious sand.

Repose fills all the generous space  
Of undulant plain; the rook and crow  
Hush; 't is as if a silent grace,  
By Nature murmured, calmed the face  
Of Heaven above and Earth below.

From past and future toils I rest,  
One Sabbath pacifies my year;  
I am the halcyon, this my nest;  
And all is safely for the best  
While the World's there and I am  
here.

So I turn tory for the nonce,  
And think the radical a bore,  
Who cannot see, thick-witted dunce,  
That what was good for people once  
Must be as good forevermore.

Sun, sink no deeper down the sky;  
Earth, never change this summer mood;  
Breeze, loiter thus forever by,  
Stir the dead leaf or let it lie:  
Since I am happy, all is good.

MIDDLETON, August, 1884.

ON BURNING SOME OLD LETTERS.

WITH what odorous woods and spices  
Spared for royal sacrifices,  
With what costly gums sold-seen,  
Hoarded to embalm a queen,  
With what frankincense and myrrh,  
Burn these precious parts of her,  
Full of life and light and sweetness  
As a summer day's completeness,  
Joy of sun and song of bird  
Running wild in every word,  
Full of all the superhuman  
Grace and winsomeness of woman?

O'er these leaves her wrist has slid,  
Thrilled with veins where fire is hid  
'Neath the skin's pellucid veil,  
Like the opal's passion pale;  
This her breath hath sweetened; this  
Still seems trembling with the kiss  
She half-ventured on my name,  
Brow and cheek and throat aflame;  
Over all caressing lies  
Sunshine left there by her eyes;  
From them all an effluence rare  
With her nearness fills the air,  
Till the murmur I half-hear  
Of her light feet drawing near.

Rarest woods were coarse and rough,  
Sweetest spice not sweet enough,  
Too impure all earthly fire  
For this sacred funeral-pyre;  
These rich relics must suffice  
For their own dear sacrifice.

Seek we first an altar fit  
 For such victims laid on it ;  
 It shall be this slab, brought home  
 In old happy days from Rome, —  
 Lazuli, once blest to line  
 Dian's inmost cell and shrine.  
 Gently now I lay them there,  
 Pure as Dian's forehead bare,  
 Yet suffused with warmer hue,  
 Such as only Latmos knew.

Fire I gather from the sun  
 In a virgin lens : 't is done !  
 Mount the flames, red, yellow, blue,  
 As her moods were shining through,  
 Of the moment's impulse born, —  
 Moods of sweetness, playful scorn,  
 Half defiance, half surrender,  
 More than cruel, more than tender,  
 Flouts, caresses, sunshine, shade,  
 Gracious doublings of a maid  
 Infinite in guileless art,  
 Playing hide-seek with her heart.

On the altar now, alas,  
 There they lie a crinkling mass,  
 Writhing still, as if with grief  
 Went the life from every leaf ;  
 Then (heart-breaking palimpsest !)  
 Vanishing ere wholly guessed,  
 Suddenly some lines flash back,  
 Traced in lightning on the black,  
 And confess, till now denied,  
 All the fire they strove to hide.  
 What they told me, sacred trust,  
 Stays to glorify my dust,  
 There to burn through dust and damp  
 Like a mage's deathless lamp,  
 While an atom of this frame  
 Lasts to feed the dainty flame.

All is ashes now, but they  
 In my soul are laid away,  
 And their radiance round me hovers  
 Soft as moonlight over lovers,  
 Shutting her and me alone  
 In dream-Edens of our own ;  
 First of lovers to invent  
 Love, and teach men what it meant.

#### THE PROTEST.

I COULD not bear to see those eyes  
 On all with wasteful largess shine,  
 And that delight of welcome rise  
 Like sunshine strained through amber  
 wine,

But that a glow from deeper skies,  
 From conscious fountains more divine,  
 Is (is it ?) mine.

Be beautiful to all mankind,  
 As Nature fashioned thee to be ;  
 'T would anger me did all not find  
 The sweet perfection that 's in thee :  
 Yet keep one charm of charms be-  
 hind, —  
 Nay, thou 'rt so rich, keep two or three  
 For (is it ?) me !

#### THE PETITION.

OH, tell me less or tell me more,  
 Soft eyes with mystery at the core,  
 That always seem to meet my own  
 Frankly as pansies fully blown,  
 Yet waver still 'tween no and yes !

So swift to cavil and deny,  
 Then parley with concessions shy,  
 Dear eyes, that make their youth be  
 mine  
 And through my inmost shadows shine.  
 Oh, tell me more or tell me less !

#### FACT OR FANCY ?

In town I hear, scarce wakened yet,  
 My neighbor's clock behind the wall  
 Record the day's increasing debt,  
 And *Cuckoo!* *Cuckoo!* faintly call.

Our senses run in deepening grooves,  
 Thrown out of which they lose their  
 tact,  
 And consciousness with effort moves  
 From habit past to present fact.

So, in the country waked to-day,  
 I hear, unwitting of the change,  
 A cuckoo's throb from far away  
 Begin to strike, nor think it strange.

The sound creates its wonted frame :  
 My bed at home, the songster hid  
 Behind the wainscoting, — all came  
 As long association bid.

Then, half-aroused, ere yet Sleep's mist  
 From the mind's uplands furl away,  
 To the familiar sound I list,  
 Disputed for by Night and Day.

I count to learn how late it is,  
 Until, arrived at thirty-four,  
 I question, "What strange world is this  
 Whose lavish hours would make me  
 poor?"

*Cuckoo! Cuckoo!* Still on it went,  
 With hints of mockery in its tone;  
 How could such hoards of time be spent  
 By one poor mortal's wit alone?

I have it! Grant, ye kindly Powers,  
 I from this spot may never stir,  
 If only these uncounted hours  
 May pass, and seem too short, with Her!

But who She is, her form and face,  
 These to the world of dream belong;  
 She moves through fancy's visioned  
 space,  
 Unbodied, like the cuckoo's song.

AGRO-DOLCE.

ONE kiss from all others prevents me,  
 And sets all my pulses astir,  
 And burns on my lips and torments me:  
 'T is the kiss that I fain would give her.

One kiss for all others requites me,  
 Although it is never to be,  
 And sweetens my dreams and invites me:  
 'T is the kiss that she dare not give me.

Ah, could it be mine, it were sweeter  
 Than honey bees garner in dream,  
 Though its bliss on my lips were fleeter  
 Than a swallow's dip to the stream.

And yet, thus denied, it can never  
 In the prose of life vanish away;  
 O'er my lips it must hover forever,  
 The sunshine and shade of my day.

THE BROKEN TRYST.

WALKING alone where we walked to-  
 gether,  
 When June was breezy and blue,  
 I watch in the gray autumnal weather  
 The leaves fall inconstant as you.

If a dead leaf startle behind me,  
 I think 't is your garment's hem,  
 And, oh, where no memory could find me,  
 Might I whirl away with them!

CASA SIN ALMA.

RECUERDO DE MADRID.

SILENCIOSO por la puerta  
 Voy de su casa desierta  
 Do siempre feliz entré,  
 Y la encuentro en vano abierta  
 Cual la boca de una muerta  
 Despues que el alma se fué.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

FOR THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL CHILDREN  
 OF THE CHURCH OF THE DISCIPLES.

"WHAT means this glory round our feet,"  
 The Magi mused, "more bright than  
 morn?"

And voices chanted clear and sweet,  
 "To-day the Prince of Peace is  
 born!"

"What means that star," the Shepherds  
 said,  
 "That brightens through the rocky  
 glen?"

And angels, answering overhead,  
 Sang, "Peace on earth, good-will to  
 men!"

'T is eighteen hundred years and more  
 Since those sweet oracles were dumb;  
 We wait for Him, like them of yore;  
 Alas, He seems so slow to come!

But it was said, in words of gold  
 No time or sorrow e'er shall dim,  
 That little children might be bold  
 In perfect trust to come to Him.

All round about our feet shall shine  
 A light like that the wise men saw,  
 If we our loving wills incline  
 To that sweet Life which is the Law.

So shall we learn to understand  
 The simple faith of shepherds then,  
 And, clasping kindly hand in hand,  
 Sing, "Peace on earth, good-will to  
 men!"

And they who do their souls no wrong,  
 But keep at eve the faith of morn,  
 Shall daily hear the angel-song,  
 "To-day the Prince of Peace is born!"



## MY PORTRAIT GALLERY.

**OFF** round my hall of portraiture I gaze,  
 By Memory reared, the artist wise and  
 holy,  
 From stainless quarries of deep-buried  
 days.  
 There, as I muse in soothing melancholy,  
 Your faces glow in more than mortal  
 youth,  
 Companions of my prime, now vanished  
 wholly,  
 The loud, impetuous boy, the low-voiced  
 maiden,  
 Now for the first time seen in flawless  
 truth.  
 Ah, never master that drew mortal breath  
 Can match thy portraits, just and gener-  
 ous Death,  
 Whose brush with sweet regretful tints is  
 laden !  
 Thou paintest that which struggled here  
 below  
 Half understood, or understood for woe,  
 And with a sweet forewarning  
 Mak'st round the sacred front an aureole  
 glow  
 Woven of that light that rose on Easter  
 morning.

## PAOLO TO FRANCESCA.

**I WAS** with thee in Heaven : I cannot tell  
 If years or moments, so the sudden bliss,  
 When first we found, then lost, us in a  
 kiss,  
 Abolished Time, abolished Earth and  
 Hell,  
 Left only Heaven. Then from our blue  
 there fell  
 The dagger's flash, and did not fall amiss,  
 For nothing now can rob my life of  
 this, —  
 That once with thee in Heaven, all else  
 is well.  
 Us, undivided when man's vengeance  
 came,  
 God's half-forgives that doth not here  
 divide ;  
 And, were this bitter whirl-blast fanged  
 with flame,  
 To me 't were summer, we being side by  
 side :  
 This granted, I God's mercy will not  
 blame,  
 For, given thy nearness, nothing is de-  
 nied.

## SONNET.

*Scottish Border.*

As sinks the sun behind yon alien hills  
 Whose heather-purpled slopes, in glory  
 rolled,  
 Flush all my thought with momentary  
 gold,  
 What pang of vague regret my fancy  
 thrills ?  
 Here 't is enchanted ground the peasant  
 tills,  
 Where the shy ballad dared its blooms  
 unfold,  
 And memory's glamour makes new  
 sights seem old,  
 As when our life some vanished dream  
 fulfils.  
 Yet not to thee belong these painless  
 tears,  
 Land loved ere seen : before my darkened  
 eyes,  
 From far beyond the waters and the  
 years,  
 Horizons mute that wait their poet rise ;  
 The stream before me fades and disap-  
 pears,  
 And in the Charles the western splendor  
 dies.

## SONNET.

*On being asked for an Autograph in Venice.*

**AMID** these fragments of heroic days  
 When thought met deed with mutual  
 passion's leap,  
 There sits a Fame whose silent trump  
 makes cheap  
 What short-lived rumor of ourselves we  
 raise.  
 They had far other estimate of praise  
 Who stamped the signet of their souls so  
 deep  
 In art and action, and whose memories  
 keep  
 Their height like stars above our misty  
 ways :  
 In this grave presence to record my  
 name  
 Something within me hangs the head  
 and shrinks.  
 Dull were the soul without some joy in  
 fame ;  
 Yet here to claim remembrance were,  
 methinks,

Like him who, in the desert's awful  
frame,  
Notches his cockney initials on the  
Sphinx.

THE DANCING BEAR.

FAR over Elf-land poets stretch their  
sway,  
And win their dearest crowns beyond the  
goal  
Of their own conscious purpose; they  
control  
With gossamer threads wide-flown our  
fancy's play,  
And so our action. On my walk to-day,  
A wallowing bear begged clumsily his  
toll,  
When straight a vision rose of Atta  
Troll,  
And scenes ideal witch'd mine eyes  
away.  
"Merci, *Mossieu!*" the astonished bear-  
ward cried,  
Grateful for thrice his hope to me, the  
slave  
Of partial memory, seeing at his side  
A bear immortal. The glad dole I gave  
Was none of mine; poor Heine o'er the  
wide  
Atlantic welter stretched it from his  
grave.

THE MAPLE.

THE Maple puts her corals on in May,  
While loitering frosts about the lowlands  
cling,  
To be in tune with what the robins sing,  
Plastering new log-huts 'mid her  
branches gray:  
But when the Autumn southward turns  
away,  
Then in her veins burns most the blood  
of Spring,  
And every leaf, intensely blossoming,  
Makes the year's sunset pale the set of  
day.  
O Youth unprecient, were it only so  
With trees you plant, and in whose shade  
reclined,  
Thinking their drifting blooms Fate's  
coldest snow,  
You carve dear names upon the faithful  
rind,

Nor in that vernal stem the cross fore-  
know  
That Age shall bear, silent, yet unre-  
signed!

NIGHTWATCHES.

WHILE the slow clock, as they were mi-  
ser's gold,  
Counts and recounts the mornward steps  
of Time,  
The darkness thrills with conscience of  
each crime  
By Death committed, daily grown more  
bold.  
Once more the list of all my wrongs is  
told,  
And ghostly hands stretch to me from  
my prime  
Helpless farewells, as from an alien  
clime;  
For each new loss redoubles all the old.  
This morn 't was May; the blossoms  
were astir  
With southern wind; but now the boughs  
are bent  
With snow instead of birds, and all things  
freeze.  
How much of all my past is dumb with  
her,  
And of my future, too, for with her  
went  
Half of that world I ever cared to please!

DEATH OF QUEEN MERCEDES.

HERS all that Earth could promise or  
bestow, —  
Youth, Beauty, Love, a crown, the beck-  
oning years,  
Lids never wet, unless with joyous tears,  
A life remote from every sordid woe,  
And by a nation's swelled to lordlier  
flow.  
What lurking-place, thought we, for  
doubts or fears,  
When, the day's swan, she swam along  
the cheers  
Of the Alcalá, five happy months ago?  
The guns were shouting Io Hymen then  
That, on her birthday, now denounce  
her doom;  
The same white steeds that tossed their  
scorn of men  
To-day as proudly drag her to the tomb.

Grim jest of fate! Yet who dare call it  
blind,  
Knowing what life is, what our human-  
kind?

## PRISON OF CERVANTES.

SEAT of all woes? Though Nature's  
firm decree  
The narrowing soul with narrowing dun-  
geon bind,  
Yet was his free of motion as the wind,  
And held both worlds, of spirit and sense,  
in fee.  
In charmed communion with his dual  
mind  
He wandered Spain, himself both knight  
and hind,  
Redressing wrongs he knew must ever be.  
His humor wise could see life's long de-  
ceit,  
Man's baffled aims, nor therefore both  
despise;  
His knightly nature could ill fortune  
greet  
Like an old friend. Whose ever such  
kind eyes  
That pierced so deep, such scope, save  
his whose feet  
By Avon ceased 'neath the same April's  
skies?

TO A LADY PLAYING ON THE  
CITHERN.

So dreamy-soft the notes, so far away  
They seem to fall, the horns of Oberon  
Blow their faint Hunt's-up from the  
good-time gone;  
Or, on a morning of long-withered May,  
Larks tinkle unseen o'er Claudian arches  
gray,  
That Romeward crawl from Dream-  
land; and anon  
My fancy flings her cloak of Darkness  
on,  
To vanish from the dungeon of To-day.  
In happier times and scenes I seem to  
be,  
And, as her fingers flutter o'er the  
strings,  
The days return when I was young as  
she,  
And my fledged thoughts began to feel  
their wings

With all Heaven's blue before them  
Memory  
Or Music is it such enchantment sings?

## THE EYE'S TREASURY.

GOLD of the reddening sunset, backward  
thrown  
In largess on my tall paternal trees,  
Thou with false hope or fear didst never  
tease  
His heart that hoards thee; nor is child-  
hood flown  
From him whose life no fairer boon hath  
known  
Than that what pleased him earliest still  
should please.  
And who hath incomes safe from chance  
as these,  
Gone in a moment, yet for life his own?  
All other gold is slave of earthward  
laws;  
This to the deeps of ether takes its flight,  
And on the topmost leaves makes glori-  
ous pause  
Of parting pathos ere it yield to night:  
So linger, as from me earth's light with-  
draws,  
Dear touch of Nature, tremulously  
bright!

## PESSIMOPTIMISM.

YE little think what toil it was to build  
A world of men imperfect even as this,  
Where we conceive of Good by what we  
miss,  
Of Ill by that wherewith best days are  
filled;  
A world whose every atom is self-willed,  
Whose corner-stone is propt on artifice,  
Whose joy is shorter-lived than woman's  
kiss,  
Whose wisdom hoarded is but to be  
spilled.  
Yet this is better than a life of caves,  
Whose highest art was scratching on a  
bone,  
Or chipping toilsome arrowheads of flint;  
Better, though doomed to hear while  
Cleon raves,  
To see wit's want eterned in paint or  
stone,  
And wade the drain-drenched shoals of  
daily print.



## THE BRAKES.

WHAT countless years and wealth of  
 brain were spent  
 To bring us hither from our caves and  
 huts,  
 And trace through pathless wilds the  
 deep-worn ruts  
 Of faith and habit, by whose deep indent  
 Prudence may guide if genius be not  
 lent, —  
 Genius, not always happy when it shuts  
 Its ears against the plodder's ifs and  
 buts,  
 Hoping in one rash leap to snatch the  
 event.  
 The coursers of the sun, whose hoofs of  
 flame  
 Consume morn's misty threshold, are  
 exact  
 As bankers' clerks, and all this star-  
 poised frame,  
 One swerve allowed, were with convul-  
 sion rackt;  
 This world were doomed, should Dulness  
 fail, to tame  
 Wit's feathered heels in the stern stocks  
 of fact.

## A FOREBODING.

WHAT were the whole void world, if  
 thou wert dead,  
 Whose briefest absence can eclipse my  
 day,  
 And make the hours that danced with  
 Time away  
 Drag their funereal steps with muffled  
 head?  
 Through thee, meseems, the very rose is  
 red,  
 From thee the violet steals its breath in  
 May,  
 From thee draw life all things that grow  
 not gray,  
 And by thy force the happy stars are  
 sped.  
 Thou near, the hope of thee to overflow  
 Fills all my earth and heaven, as when  
 in Spring,  
 Ere April come, the birds and blossoms  
 know,  
 And grasses brighten round her feet to  
 cling;  
 Nay, and this hope delights all nature so  
 That the dumb turf I tread on seems to  
 sing.

### III. FANCY.

#### UNDER THE OCTOBER MAPLES.

WHAT mean these banners spread,  
These paths with royal red  
So gaily carpeted?  
Comes there a prince to-day?  
Such footing were too fine  
For feet less argentine  
Than Dian's own or thine,  
Queen whom my tides obey.

Surely for thee are meant  
These hues so orient  
That with a sultan's tent  
Each tree invites the sun;  
Our Earth such homage pays,  
So decks her dusty ways,  
And keeps such holidays,  
For one, and only one.

My brain shapes form and face,  
Throbs with the rhythmic grace  
And cadence of her pace  
To all fine instincts true;  
Her footsteps, as they pass,  
Than moonbeams over grass  
Fall lighter, — and, alas,  
More insubstantial too!

#### LOVE'S CLOCK.

##### A PASTORAL.

DAPHNIS *waiting*

\*O DRYAD feet,  
Be doubly fleet,  
Timed to my heart's expectant beat  
While I await her!  
\*At four, vowed she;  
\*T is scarcely three,

Yet by *my* time it seems to be  
A good hour later!"

CHLOR.

"Bid me not stay!  
Hear reason, pray!  
'T is striking six! Sure never day  
Was short as this is!"

DAPHNIS.

"Reason nor rhyme  
Is in the chime!  
It can't be five; I've scarce had time  
To beg two kisses!"

BOTH.

"Early or late,  
When lovers wait,  
And Love's watch gain, if Time a  
gait  
So snail-like chooses,  
Why should his feet  
Become more fleet  
Than cowards' are, when lovers meet  
And Love's watch loses?"

#### ELEANOR MAKES MACAROONS.

LIGHT of triumph in her eyes,  
Eleanor her apron ties;  
As she pushes back her sleeves,  
High resolve her bosom heaves.  
Hasten, cook! impel the fire  
To the pace of her desire;  
As you hope to save your soul,  
Bring a virgin casserole,  
Brightest bring of silver spoons, —  
Eleanor makes macaroons!

Almond-blossoms, now adance  
 In the smile of Southern France,  
 Leave your sport with sun and breeze,  
 Think of duty, not of ease;  
 Fashion, 'neath their jerkins brown,  
 Kernels white as thistle-down,  
 'Tiny cheeses made with cream  
 From the Galaxy's mid-stream,  
 Blanched in light of honeymoons, —  
 Eleanor makes macaroons!

Now for sugar, — nay, our plan  
 Tolerates no work of man.  
 Hurry, then, ye golden bees;  
 Fetch your clearest honey, please,  
 Garnered on a Yorkshire moor,  
 While the last larks sing and soar,  
 From the heather-blossoms sweet  
 Where sea-breeze and sunshine meet,  
 And the Augusts mask as Junes, —  
 Eleanor makes macaroons!

Next the pestle and mortar find,  
 Pure rock-crystal, — these to grind  
 Into paste more smooth than silk,  
 Whiter than the milkweed's milk:  
 Spread it on a rose-leaf, thus,  
 Cate to please Theocritus;  
 'Then the fire with spices swell,  
 While, for her completer spell,  
 Mystic canticles she croons, —  
 Eleanor makes macaroons!

Perfect! and all this to waste  
 On a graybeard's palsied taste!  
 Poets so their verses write,  
 Heap them full of life and light,  
 And then fling them to the rude  
 Mumbling of the multitude.  
 Not so dire her fate as theirs,  
 Since her friend this gift declares  
 Choicest of his birthday boons, —  
 Eleanor's dear macaroons!

February 22, 1884.

### TELEPATHY.

"AND how could you dream of meet-  
 ing?"

Nay, how can you ask me, sweet?  
 All day my pulse had been beating  
 The tune of your coming feet.

And as nearer and ever nearer  
 I felt the throb of your tread,  
 To be in the world grew dearer,  
 And my blood ran rosier red.

Love called, and I could not linger,  
 But sought the forbidden tryst,  
 As music follows the finger  
 Of the dreaming lutanist.

And though you had said it and said it,  
 "We must not be happy to-day,"  
 Was I not wiser to credit  
 The fire in my feet than your Nay?

### SCHERZO.

WHEN the down is on the chin  
 And the gold-gleam in the hair,  
 When the birds their sweethearts win  
 And champagne is in the air,  
 Love is here, and Love is there,  
 Love is welcome everywhere.

Summer's cheek too soon turns thin,  
 Days grow briefer, sunshine rare;  
 Autumn from his cannekin  
 Blows the froth to chase Despair:  
 Love is met with frosty stare,  
 Cannot house 'neath branches bare.

When new life is in the leaf  
 And new red is in the rose,  
 Though Love's Maytime be as brief  
 As a dragon-fly's repose,  
 Never moments come like those,  
 Be they Heaven or Hell: who knows?

All too soon comes Winter's grief,  
 Spendthrift Love's false friends turn foes;  
 Softly comes Old Age, the thief,  
 Steals the rapture, leaves the throes:  
 Love his mantle round him throws, —  
 "Time to say Good-bye; it snows."

"FRANCISCUS DE VERULAMIO SIC  
 COGITAVIT."

THAT'S a rather bold speech, my Lord  
 Bacon,  
 For, indeed, is 't so easy to know  
 Just how much we from others have  
 taken,  
 And how much our own natural flow?

Since your mind bubbled up at its foun-  
 tain,  
 How many streams made it elate,  
 While it calmed to the plain from the  
 mountain,  
 As every mind must that grows great!



While you thought 't was You thinking  
as newly  
As Adam still wet with God's dew,  
You forgot in your self-pride that truly  
The whole Past was thinking through  
you.

Greece, Rome, nay, your namesake, old  
Roger,  
With Truth's nameless delvers who  
wrought  
In the dark mines of Truth, helped to  
prod your  
Fine brain with the goad of their  
thought.

As mummy was prized for a rich hue  
The painter no elsewhere could find,  
So 't was buried men's thinking with  
which you  
Gave the ripe mellow tone to your  
mind.

I heard the proud strawberry saying,  
"Only look what a ruby I've made!"  
It forgot how the bees in their maying  
Had brought it the stuff for its trade.

And yet there's the half of a truth in  
it,  
And my Lord might his copyright sue;  
For a thought's his who kindles new  
youth in it,  
Or so puts it as makes it more true.

The birds but repeat without ending  
The same old traditional notes,  
Which some, by more happily blending,  
Seem to make over new in their  
throats;

And we men through our old bit of song  
run,  
Until one just improves on the rest,  
And we call a thing his, in the long  
run,  
Who utters it clearest and best.

## AUSPEX.

My heart, I cannot still it,  
Nest that had song-birds in it;  
And when the last shall go,  
The dreary days, to fill it,  
Instead of lark or linnet,  
Shall whirl dead leaves and snow.

Had they been swallows only,  
Without the passion stronger  
That skyward longs and sings, —  
Woe's me, I shall be lonely  
When I can feel no longer  
The impatience of their wings!

A moment, sweet delusion,  
Like birds the brown leaves hover;  
But it will not be long  
Before their wild confusion  
Fall wavering down to cover  
The poet and his song.

## THE PREGNANT COMMENT.

OPENING one day a book of mine,  
I absent, Hester found a line  
Praised with a pencil-mark, and this  
She left transfigured with a kiss.

When next upon the page I chance,  
Like Poussin's nymphs my pulses dance,  
And whirl my fancy where it sees  
Pan piping 'neath Arcadian trees,  
Whose leaves no winter-scenes rehearse,  
Still young and glad as Homer's verse.  
"What mean," I ask, "these sudden  
joys?"

This feeling fresher than a boy's?  
What makes this line, familiar long,  
New as the first bird's April song?  
I could, with sense illumined thus,  
Clear doubtful texts in Æschylus!"

Laughing, one day she gave the key,  
My riddle's open-sesame;  
Then added, with a smile demure,  
Whose downcast lids veiled triumph  
sure,  
"If what I left there give you pain,  
You — you — can take it off again;  
'T was for *my* poet, not for him,  
Your Doctor Donne there!"

Earth grew dim  
And wavered in a golden mist,  
As rose, not paper, leaves I kissed.  
Donne, you forgive? I let you keep  
Her precious comment, poet deep.

## THE LESSON.

I SAT and watched the walls of night  
With cracks of sudden lightning glow,

And listened while with clumsy might  
The thunder wallowed to and fro.

The rain fell softly now ; the squall,  
That to a torrent drove the trees,  
Had whirled beyond us to let fall  
Its tumult on the whitening seas.

But still the lightning crinkled keen,  
Or fluttered fitful from behind  
The leaden drifts, then only seen,  
That rumbled eastward on the wind.

Still as gloom followed after glare,  
While bated breath the pine-trees drew,  
Tiny Salmons of the air,  
His mimic bolts the firefly threw.

He thought, no doubt, "Those flashes  
grand,  
That light for leagues the shuddering  
sky,  
Are made, a fool could understand,  
By some superior kind of fly.

"He's of our race's elder branch  
His family-arms the same as ours,  
Both born the twy-forked flame to  
launch,  
Of kindred, if unequal, powers."

And is man wiser ? Man who takes  
His consciousness the law to be  
Of all beyond his ken, and makes  
God but a bigger kind of Me ?

#### SCIENCE AND POETRY.

HE who first stretched his nerves of sub-  
tile wire  
Over the land and through the sea-depths  
still,  
Thought only of the flame-winged mes-  
senger  
As a dull drudge that should encircle  
earth  
With sordid messages of Trade, and tame  
Blithe Ariel to a bagman. But the Muse  
Not long will be defrauded. From her  
foe  
Her misused wand she snatches ; at a  
touch,  
The Age of Wonder is renewed again,  
And to our disenchanting day restores  
The Shoes of Swiftmess that give odds to  
Thought,

The Cloak that makes invisible ; and  
with these

I glide, an airy fire, from shore to shore,  
Or from my Cambridge whisper to Ca-  
thay.

#### A NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

THE century numbers fourscore years ;  
You, fortified in your teens,  
To Time's alarms close your ears,  
And, while he devastates your peers,  
Conceive not what he means.

If e'er life's winter fleck with snow  
Your hair's deep shadowed bowers,  
That winsome head an art would know  
To make it charm, and wear it so  
As 't were a wreath of flowers.

If to such fairies years must come,  
May yours fall soft and slow  
As, shaken by a bee's low hum,  
The rose-leaves waver, sweetly dumb,  
Down to their mates below !

#### THE DISCOVERY.

I WATCHED a moorland torrent run  
Down through the rift itself had made,  
Golden as honey in the sun,  
Of darkest amber in the shade.

In this wild glen at last, methought,  
The magic's secret I surprise ;  
Here Celia's guardian fairy caught  
The changeful splendors of her eyes.

All else grows tame, the sky's one blue,  
The one long languish of the rose,  
But these, beyond prevision new,  
Shall charm and startle to the close.

#### WITH A SEASHELL.

SHELL, whose lips, than mine more cold  
Might with Dian's ear make bold,  
Seek my Lady's ; if thou win  
To that portal, shut from sin,  
Where commissioned angels' swords  
Startle back unholy words,  
Thou a miracle shalt see  
Wrought by it and wrought in thee ;  
Thou, the dumb one, shalt recover

Speech of poet, speech of lover.  
 If she deign to lift you there,  
 Murmur what I may not dare;  
 In that archway, pearly-pink  
 As the Dawn's untrodden brink,  
 Murmur, "Excellent and good,  
 Beauty's best in every mood,  
 Never common, never tame,  
 Changeful fair as windwaved flame" —  
 Nay, I maunder; this she hears  
 Every day with mocking ears,  
 With a brow not sudden-stained  
 With the flush of bliss restrained,  
 With no tremor of the pulse  
 More than feels the dreaming dulse  
 In the midmost ocean's caves,  
 When a tempest heaps the waves.  
 Thou must woo her in a phrase  
 Mystic as the opal's blaze,  
 Which pure maids alone can see  
 When their lovers constant be.  
 I with thee a secret share,  
 Half a hope, and half a prayer,  
 Though no reach of mortal skill  
 Ever told it all, or will;

Say, "He bids me — nothing more —  
 Tell you what you guessed before!"

#### THE SECRET.

I HAVE a fancy: how shall I bring it  
 Home to all mortals wherever they be?  
 Say it or sing it? Shoe it or wing it,  
 So it may outrun or outfly ME,  
 Merest cocoon-web whence it broke free?

Only one secret can save from disaster,  
 Only one magic is that of the Master:  
 Set it to music; give it a tune, —  
 Tune the brook sings you, tune the breeze  
 brings you,  
 Tune the wild columbines nod to in June!

This is the secret: so simple, you see!  
 Easy as loving, easy as kissing,  
 Easy as — well, let me ponder — as miss-  
 ing,  
 Known, since the world was, by scarce  
 two or three.



## IV. HUMOR AND SATIRE.

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### FITZ ADAM'S STORY.

[The greater part of this poem was written many years ago as part of a larger one, to be called "The Nooning," made up of tales in verse, some of them grave, some comic. It gives me a sad pleasure to remember that I was encouraged in this project by my friend the late Arthur Hugh Clough.]

THE next whose fortune 't was a tale to tell  
Was one whom men, before they thought,  
loved well,  
And after thinking wondered why they did,  
For half he seemed to let them, half  
forbid,  
And wrapped him so in humors, sheath  
on sheath,  
'T was hard to guess the mellow soul  
beneath;  
But, once divined, you took him to your  
heart,  
While he appeared to bear with you as  
part  
Of life's impertinence, and once a year  
Betrayed his true self by a smile or tear,  
Or rather something sweetly-shy and  
loath,  
Withdrawn ere fully shown, and mixed  
of both.  
A cynic? Not precisely: one who thrust  
Against a heart too prone to love and  
trust,  
Who so despised false sentiment he  
knew  
Scarce in himself to part the false and  
true,  
And strove to hide, by roughening-o'er  
the skin,  
Those cobweb nerves he could not dull  
within.  
Gentle by birth, but of a stem decayed,

He shunned life's rivalries and hated  
trade;  
On a small patrimony and larger pride,  
He lived uneaseful on the Other Side  
(So he called Europe), only coming  
West  
To give his Old-World appetite new  
zest;  
Yet still the New World spooked it in  
his veins,  
A ghost he could not lay with all his  
pains;  
For never Pilgrims' offshoot scapes  
control  
Of those old instincts that have shaped  
his soul.  
A radical in thought, he puffed away  
With shrewd contempt the dust of usage  
gray,  
Yet loathed democracy as one who saw,  
In what he longed to love, some vulgar  
flaw,  
And, shocked through all his delicate  
reserves,  
Remained a Tory by his taste and nerves.  
His fancy's thrall, he drew all ergoes  
thence,  
And thought himself the type of common  
sense;  
Misliking women, not from cross or  
whim,  
But that his mother shared too much in  
him,  
And he half felt that what in them was  
grace  
Made the unlucky weakness of his race.  
What powers he had he hardly cared to  
know,  
But sauntered through the world as  
through a show;  
A critic fine in his haphazard way,  
A sort of mild La Bruyère on half-pay.  
For comic weaknesses he had an eye

Keen as an acid for an alkali,  
 Yet you could feel, through his sardonic  
 tone,  
 He loved them all, unless they were his  
 own.  
 You might have called him, with his  
 humorous twist,  
 A kind of human entomologist:  
 As these bring home, from every walk  
 they take,  
 Their hat-crowns stuck with bugs of  
 curious make,  
 So he filled all the lining of his head  
 With characters impaled and ticketed,  
 And had a cabinet behind his eyes  
 For all they caught of mortal oddities.  
 He might have been a poet — many  
 worse —  
 But that he had, or feigned, contempt of  
 verse;  
 Called it tattooing language, and held  
 rhymes  
 The young world's lullaby of ruder  
 times.  
 Bitter in words, too indolent for gall,  
 He satirized himself the first of all,  
 In men and their affairs could find no law,  
 And was the ill logic that he thought he  
 saw.

Scratching a match to light his pipe  
 anew,  
 With eyes half shut some musing whiffs  
 he drew,  
 And thus began: "I give you all my  
 word,  
 I think this mock-Decameron absurd;  
 Boccaccio's garden! how bring that to  
 pass  
 In our bleak clime save under double  
 glass?  
 The moral east-wind of New England  
 life  
 Would snip its gay luxuriance like a  
 knife;  
 Mile-deep the glaciers brooded here,  
 they say,  
 Through æons numb; we feel their  
 chill to-day.  
 These foreign plants are but half-hardy  
 still,  
 Die on a south, and on a north wall  
 chill.  
 Had we stayed Puritans! *They* had  
 some heat  
 (Though whence derived I have my own  
 conceit),

But you have long ago raked up their  
 fires;  
 Where they had faith, you've ten sham-  
 Gothic spires.  
 Why more exotics? Try your native  
 vines,  
 And in some thousand years you *may*  
 have wines;  
 Your present grapes are harsh, all pulps  
 and skins,  
 And want traditions of ancestral bins  
 That saved for evenings round the pol-  
 ished board  
 Old lava-fires, the sun-steeped hillside's  
 hoard.  
 Without a Past, you lack that southern  
 wall  
 O'er which the vines of Poesy should  
 crawl;  
 Still they're your only hope; no mid-  
 night oil  
 Makes up for virtue wanting in the  
 soil;  
 Manure them well and prune them;  
 't won't be France,  
 Nor Spain, nor Italy, but there's your  
 chance.  
 You have one story-teller worth a score  
 Of dead Boccaccios, — nay, add twenty  
 more, —  
 A hawthorn asking spring's most dainty  
 pipe  
 breath,  
 And him you're freezing pretty well to  
 death.  
 However, since you say so, I will tease  
 My memory to a story by degrees,  
 Though you will cry, 'Enough!' I'm  
 wellnigh sure,  
 Ere I have dreamed through half my  
 overture.  
 Stories were good for men who had no  
 books,  
 (Fortunate race!) and built their nests  
 like rooks  
 In lonely towers, to which the Jongleur  
 brought  
 His pedler's-box of cheap and tawdry  
 thought,  
 With here and there a fancy fit to see  
 Wrought to quaint grace in golden  
 filigree, —  
 Some ring that with the Muse's finger  
 yet  
 Is warm, like Aucassin and Nicolette;  
 The morning newspaper has spoilt his  
 trade,  
 (For better or for worse, I leave unsaid,)

And stories now, to suit a public nice,  
Must be half epigram, half pleasant vice.

“All tourists know Shebagog County :  
there  
The summer idlers take their yearly  
stare,  
Dress to see Nature in a well-bred way,  
As 't were Italian opera, or play,  
Encore the sunrise (if they're out of  
bed),  
And pat the Mighty Mother on the  
head :  
These have I seen, — all things are good  
to see, —  
And wondered much at their compla-  
cency.  
This world's great show, that took in  
getting-up  
Millions of years, they finish ere they  
sup ;  
Sights that God gleams through with  
soul-tingling force  
They glance approvingly as things of  
course,  
Say, 'That's a grand rock,' 'This a  
pretty fall,'  
Not thinking, 'Are we worthy?' What  
if all  
The scornful landscape should turn  
round and say,  
'This is a fool, and that a popinjay' ?  
I often wonder what the Mountain  
thinks  
Of French boots creaking o'er his breath-  
less brinks,  
Or how the Sun would scare the chatter-  
ing crowd,  
If some fine day he chanced to think  
aloud.  
I, who love Nature much as sinners can,  
Love her where she most grandeur  
shows, — in man :  
Here find I mountain, forest, cloud, and  
sun,  
River and sea, and glows when day is  
done ;  
Nay, where she makes grotesques, and  
moulds in jest  
The clown's cheap clay, I find unfading  
zest.  
The natural instincts year by year  
retire,  
As deer shrink northward from the set-  
tler's fire,  
And he who loves the wild game-flavor  
more

Than city-feasts, where every man's a  
bore  
To every other man, must seek it where  
The steamer's throb and railway's iron  
blare  
Have not yet startled with their punctual  
stir  
The shy, wood-wandering brood of Char-  
acter.

“There is a village, once the county  
town,  
Through which the weekly mail rolled  
dustily down,  
Where the courts sat, it may be, twice a  
year,  
And the one tavern reeked with rustic  
cheer ;  
Cheeshogquesumscot erst, now Jethro  
hight,  
Red-man and pale-face bore it equal  
spite.  
The railway ruined it, the natives say,  
That passed unwisely fifteen miles away,  
And made a drain to which, with steady  
ooze,  
Filtered away law, stage-coach, trade,  
and news.  
The railway saved it ; so at least think  
those  
Who love old ways, old houses, old  
repose.  
Of course the Tavern stayed : its genial  
host  
Thought not of flitting more than did  
the post  
On which high-hung the fading sign-  
board creaks,  
Inscribed, 'The Eagle Inn, by Ezra  
Weeks.'

“If in life's journey you should ever  
find  
An inn medicinal for body and mind,  
'T is sure to be some drowsy-looking  
house  
Whose easy landlord has a bustling  
spouse :  
He, if he like you, will not long forego  
Some bottle deep in cobwebbed dust laid  
low,  
That, since the War we used to call the  
'Last,'  
Has dozed and held its lang-syne mem-  
ories fast ;  
From him exhales that Indian-summer  
air



Of hazy, lazy welcome everywhere,  
 While with her toil the napery is white,  
 The china dustless, the keen knife-  
 blades bright,  
 Salt dry as sand, and bread that seems  
 as though  
 'T were rather sea-foam baked than  
 vulgar dough.

"In our swift country, houses trim  
 and white  
 Are pitched like tents, the lodging of a  
 night;  
 Each on its bank of baked turf mounted  
 high  
 Perches impatient o'er the roadside dry,  
 While the wronged landscape coldly  
 stands aloof,  
 Refusing friendship with the upstart  
 roof.  
 Not so the Eagle; on a grass-green  
 swell  
 That toward the south with sweet con-  
 cessions fell  
 It dwelt retired, and half had grown to  
 be  
 As aboriginal as rock or tree.  
 It nestled close to earth, and seemed to  
 brood  
 O'er homely thoughts in a half-conscious  
 mood,  
 As by the peat that rather fades than  
 burns  
 The smouldering grandam nods and  
 knits by turns,  
 Happy, although her newest news were  
 old  
 Ere the first hostile drum at Concord  
 rolled.  
 If paint it e'er had known, it knew no  
 more  
 Than yellow lichens spattered thickly  
 o'er  
 That soft lead-gray, less dark beneath  
 the eaves  
 Which the slow brush of wind and  
 weather leaves.  
 The ample roof sloped backward to the  
 ground,  
 And vassal lean-tos gathered thickly  
 round,  
 Patched on, as sire or son had felt the  
 need,  
 Like chance growths sprouting from the  
 old roof's seed,  
 Just as about a yellow-pine-tree spring  
 Its rough-barked darlings in a filial ring.

But the great chimney was the central  
 thought  
 Whose gravitation through the cluster  
 wrought;  
 For 't is not styles far-fetched from  
 Greece or Rome,  
 But just the Fireside, that can make a  
 home;  
 None of your spindling things of modern  
 style,  
 Like pins stuck through to stay the card-  
 built pile,  
 It rose broad-shouldered, kindly, de-  
 bonair,  
 Its warm breath whitening in the Octo-  
 ber air,  
 While on its front a heart in outline  
 showed  
 The place it filled in that serene abode.

"When first I chanced the Eagle to  
 explore,  
 Ezra sat listless by the open door;  
 One chair careened him at an angle  
 meet,  
 Another nursed his hugely-slippered  
 feet;  
 Upon a third reposed a shirt-sleeved  
 arm,  
 And the whole man diffused tobacco's  
 charm.  
 'Are you the landlord?' 'Wahl, I guess  
 I be,'  
 Watching the smoke, he answered lei-  
 surely.  
 He was a stoutish man, and through the  
 breast  
 Of his loose shirt there showed a brambly  
 chest;  
 Streaked redly as a wind-foreboding  
 morn,  
 His tanned cheeks curved to temples  
 closely shorn;  
 Clean-shaved he was, save where a hedge  
 of gray  
 Upon his brawny throat leaned every  
 way  
 About an Adam's-apple, that beneath  
 Bulged like a boulder from a brambly  
 heath.  
 The Western World's true child and  
 nursling he,  
 Equipt with aptitudes enough for three:  
 No eye like his to value horse or cow,  
 Or gauge the contents of a stack or  
 mow;  
 He could foretell the weather at a word,

He knew the haunt of every beast and  
bird,  
Or where a two-pound trout was sure  
to lie,  
Waiting the flutter of his home-made  
fly;  
Nay, once in autumns five, he had the  
luck  
To drop at fair-play range a ten-tined  
buck;  
Of sportsmen true he favored every  
whim,  
But never cockney found a guide in  
him;  
A natural man, with all his instincts  
fresh,  
Not buzzing helpless in Reflection's  
mesh,  
Firm on its feet stood his broad-should-  
ered mind,  
As bluffly honest as a northwest wind;  
Hard-headed and soft-hearted, you'd  
scarce meet  
A kindlier mixture of the shrewd and  
sweet;  
Generous by birth, and ill at saying  
'No,'  
Yet in a bargain he was all men's foe,  
Would yield no inch of vantage in a  
trade,  
And give away ere nightfall all he made.

"Can I have lodging here?" once  
more I said.  
He blew a whiff, and, leaning back his  
head,  
'You come a piece through Bailey's  
woods, I s'pose,  
Across a bridge where a big swamp-oak  
grows?  
It don't grow, neither; it's ben dead ten  
year,  
Nor th' ain't a livin' creetur, fur nor  
near,  
Can tell wut killed it; but I some mis-  
doubt  
'T was borers, there's sech heaps on 'em  
about.  
You did n' chance to run ag'inst my son,  
A long, slab-sided youngster with a  
gun?  
He'd oughto ben back more 'n an hour  
ago,  
An' brought some birds to dress for sup-  
per — sho!  
There he comes now. 'Say, Obed, wut  
ye got?

(He'll hev some upland plover like as  
not.)  
Wal, them's real nice uns, an'll eat  
A 1,  
Ef I can stop their bein' over-done;  
Nothin' riles me (I pledge my fastin'  
word)  
Like cookin' out the natur' of a bird;  
(Obed, you pick 'em out o' sight an'  
sound,  
Your ma'am don't love no feathers  
cluttrin' round;)  
Jes' scare 'em with the coals, — that's  
my idee.'  
Then, turning suddenly about on me,  
'Wal, Square, I guess so. Callilate to  
stay?  
I'll ask Mis' Weeks; 'bout *that* it's hern  
to say.'

"Well, there I lingered all October  
through,  
In that sweet atmosphere of hazy blue,  
So leisurely, so soothing, so forgiving,  
That sometimes makes New England fit  
for living.  
I watched the landscape, erst so granite  
glum,  
Bloom like the south side of a ripening  
plum,  
And each rock-maple on the hillside  
make  
His ten days' sunset doubled in the lake;  
The very stone walls draggling up the  
hills  
Seemed touched, and wavered in their  
roundhead wills.  
Ah! there's a deal of sugar in the sun!  
Tap me in Indian summer, I should run  
A juice to make rock-candy of, — but  
then  
We get such weather scarce one year in  
ten.

"There was a parlor in the house, a  
room  
To make you shudder with its prudish  
gloom.  
The furniture stood round with such an  
air,  
There seemed an old maid's ghost in  
every chair  
Which looked as it had scuttled to its  
place  
And pulled extempore a Sunday face,  
Too smugly proper for a world of sin,  
Like boys on whom the minister comes in.

The table, fronting you with icy stare,  
Strove to look witless that its legs were  
bare,

While the black sofa with its horse-hair  
pall

Gloomed like a bier for Comfort's fun-  
eral.

Each piece appeared to do its chilly best  
To seem an utter stranger to the rest,  
As if acquaintanceship were deadly sin,  
Like Britons meeting in a foreign inn.

Two portraits graced the wall in grim-  
mest truth,

Mister and Mistress W. in their youth, —  
New England youth, that seems a sort  
of pill,

Half wish-I-dared, half Edwards on the  
Will,

Bitter to swallow, and which leaves a  
trace

Of Calvinistic choleric on the face.  
Between them, o'er the mantel, hung in  
state

Solomon's temple, done in copperplate;  
Invention pure, but meant, we may pre-  
sume,

To give some Scripture sanction to the  
room.

Facing this last, two samplers you might  
see,

Each, with its urn and stiffly-weeping  
tree,

Devoted to some memory long ago  
More faded than their lines of worsted  
woe;

Cut paper decked their frames against  
the flies,

Though none e'er dared an entrance who  
were wise,

And bushed asparagus in fading green  
Added its shiver to the franklin clean.

“When first arrived, I chilled a half-  
hour there,

Nor dared deflower with use a single  
chair;

I caught no cold, yet flying pains could  
find

For weeks in me, — a rheumatism of  
mind.

One thing alone imprisoned there had  
power

To hold me in the place that long half-  
hour:

A scutcheon this, a helm-surmounted  
shield,

Three griffins argent on a sable field;

A relic of the shipwrecked past was here,  
And Ezra held some Old-World lumber  
dear.

Nay, do not smile; I love this kind of  
thing,

These cooped traditions with a broken  
wing,

This freehold nook in Fancy's pipe-  
blown ball,

This less than nothing that is more than  
all!

Have I not seen sweet natures kept  
alive

Amid the humdrum of your business  
hive,

Undowered spinsters shielded from all  
harms,

By airy incomes from a coat of arms? ”

He paused a moment, and his features  
took

The fitting sweetness of that inward  
look

I hinted at before; but, scarcely seen,  
It shrank for shelter 'neath his harder  
mien,

And, rapping his black pipe of ashes  
clear,

He went on with a self-derisive sneer:  
“No doubt we make a part of God's  
design,

And break the forest-path for feet  
divine;

To furnish foothold for this grand pre-  
vision

Is good, and yet — to be the mere tran-  
sition,

That, you will say, is also good, though I  
Scarce like to feed the ogre By-and-by.

Raw edges rasp my nerves; my taste is  
wooded

By things that are, not going to be,  
good,

Though were I what I dreamed two  
lustres gone,

I'd stay to help the Consummation on,  
Whether a new Rome than the old more  
fair,

Or a deadflat of rascal-ruled despair;  
But my skull somehow never closed the  
suture

That seems to knit yours firmly with the  
future,

So you 'll excuse me if I'm sometimes  
fain

To tie the past's warm nightcap o'er my  
brain;



I 'm quite aware 't is not in fashion  
here,  
But then your northeast winds are so  
severe!

"But to my story: though 't is truly  
naught  
But a few hints in Memory's sketchbook  
caught,  
And which may claim a value on the  
score  
Of calling back some scenery now no  
more.  
Shall I confess? The tavern's only  
Lar  
Seemed (be not shocked!) its homely-  
featured bar.  
Here dozed a fire of beechen logs, that  
bred  
Strange fancies in its embers golden-red,  
And nursed the loggerhead whose hissing  
dip,  
Timed by nice instinct, creamed the mug  
of flip  
That made from mouth to mouth its  
genial round,  
Nor left one nature wholly winter-  
bound;  
Hence dropt the tinkling coal all mellow-  
ripe  
For Uncle Reuben's talk-extinguished  
pipe;  
Hence rayed the heat, as from an in-  
door sun,  
That wooed forth many a shoot of rustic  
fun.  
Here Ezra ruled as king by right  
divine;  
No other face had such a wholesome shine,  
No laugh like his so full of honest cheer;  
Above the rest it crowed like Chanti-  
cleer.

"In this one room his dame you never  
saw,  
Where reigned by custom old a Salic  
law;  
Here coatless lolled he on his throne of  
oak,  
And every tongue paused midway if he  
spoke.  
Due mirth he loved, yet was his sway  
severe:  
No blear-eyed driveller got his stagger  
here;  
'Measure was happiness; who wanted  
more,

Must buy his ruin at the Deacon's store;  
None but his lodgers after ten could  
stay,

Nor after nine on eves of Sabbath-day.  
He had his favorites and his pensioners,  
The same that gypsy Nature owns for  
hers:

Loose-ended souls, whose skilis bring  
scanty gold,  
And whom the poor-house catches when  
they 're old:

Rude country-minstrels, men who doctor  
kine,  
Or graft, and, out of scions ten, save nine;  
Creatures of genius they, but never  
meant

To keep step with the civic regiment.  
These Ezra welcomed, feeling in his  
mind

Perhaps some motions of the vagrant  
kind;  
These paid no money, yet for them he  
drew

Special Jamaica from a tap they knew,  
And, for their feelings, chalked behind  
the door

With solemn face a visionary score.  
This thawed to life in Uncle Reuben's  
throat

A torpid shoal of jest and anecdote,  
Like those queer fish that doze the  
drougths away,

And wait for moisture, wrapt in sun-  
baked clay;

This warmed the one-eyed fiddler to his  
task,

Perched in the corner on an empty cask,  
By whose shrill art rapt suddenly, some  
boor

Rattled a double-shuffle on the floor;  
'Hull's Victory' was, indeed, the fa-  
vorite air,

Though 'Yankee Doodle' claimed its  
proper share.

"'T was there I caught from Uncle  
Reuben's lips,

In dribbling monologue 'twixt whiffs  
and sips,

The story I so long have tried to tell;  
The humor coarse, the persons common,  
— well,

From Nature only do I love to paint,  
Whether she send a satyr or a saint;  
To me Sincerity 's the one thing good,  
Soiled though she be and lost to main-  
denhood.

Quompegan is a town some ten miles  
south

From Jethro, at Nagumscot river-mouth,  
A seaport town, and makes its title good  
With lumber and dried fish and eastern  
wood.

Here Deacon Bitters dwelt and kept the  
Store,  
The richest man for many a mile of  
shore ;

In little less than everything dealt he,  
From meeting-houses to a chest of tea ;  
So dextrous therewithal a flint to skin,  
He could make profit on a single pin ;  
In business strict, to bring the balance  
true

He had been known to bite a fig in two,  
And change a board-nail for a shingle-  
nail.

All that he had he ready held for sale,  
His house, his tomb, whate'er the law al-  
lows,

And he had gladly parted with his spouse.  
His one ambition still to get and get,  
He would arrest your very ghost for debt.  
His store looked righteous, should the  
Parson come,

But in a dark back-room he peddled rum,  
And eased Ma'am Conscience, if she e'er  
would scold,

By christening it with water ere he sold.  
A small, dry man he was, who wore a  
queue,

And one white neckcloth all the week-  
days through, —

On Monday white, by Saturday as dun  
As that worn homeward by the prodigal  
son.

His frosted earlocks, striped with foxy  
brown,

Were braided up to hide a desert crown ;  
His coat was brownish, black perhaps of  
yore ;

In summer-time a banyan loose he wore ;  
His trousers short, through many a sea-  
son true,

Made no pretence to hide his stockings  
blue ;

A waistcoat buff his chief adornment was,  
Its porcelain buttons rimmed with dusky  
brass.

A deacon he, you saw it in each limb,  
And well he knew to deacon-off a hymn,  
Or lead the choir through all its wander-  
ing woes

With voice that gathered unction in his  
nose,

Wherein a constant snuffle you might  
hear,  
As if with him 'twere winter all the  
year.

At pew-head sat he with decorous pains,  
In sermon-time could foot his weekly  
gains,  
Or, with closed eyes and heaven-ab-  
stracted air,  
Could plan a new investment in long-  
prayer.

A pious man, and thrifty too, he made  
The psalms and prophets partners in his  
trade,  
And in his orthodoxy straitened more  
As it enlarged the business at his store.  
He honored Moses, but, when gain he  
planned,  
Had his own notion of the Promised  
Land.

“ Soon as the winter made the sledding  
good,  
From far around the farmers hauled him  
wood,  
For all the trade had gathered 'neath his  
thumb.

He paid in groceries and New England  
rum,  
Making two profits with a conscience  
clear, —  
Cheap all he bought, and all he paid with  
dear.

With his own mete-wand measuring ev-  
ery load,  
Each somehow had diminished on the  
road ;

An honest cord in Jethro still would fail  
By a good foot upon the Deacon's scale,  
And, more to abate the price, his gimlet  
eye

Would pierce to cat-sticks that none else  
could spy ;  
Yet none dared grumble, for no farmer  
yet  
But New Year found him in the Dea-  
con's debt.

“ While the first snow was mealy un-  
der feet,  
A team drawled creaking down Quom-  
pegan street.

Two cords of oak weighed down the  
grinding sled,  
And cornstalk fodder rustled overhead ;  
The oxen's muzzles, as they shouldered  
through,

Were silver-fringed; the driver's own  
 was blue  
 As the coarse frock that swung below  
 his knee.  
 Behind his load for shelter waded he;  
 His mittened hands now on his chest he  
 beat,  
 Now stamped the stiffened cowhides of  
 his feet,  
 Hushed as a ghost's; his armpit scarce  
 could hold  
 The walnut whipstock slippery-bright  
 with cold.  
 What wonder if, the tavern as he past,  
 He looked and longed, and stayed his  
 beasts at last,  
 Who patient stood and veiled themselves  
 in steam  
 While he explored the bar-room's ruddy  
 gleam?

"Before the fire, in want of thought  
 profound,  
 There sat a brother-townsman weather-  
 bound:  
 A sturdy churl, crisp-headed, bristly-  
 eared,  
 Red as a pepper; 'twixt coarse brows  
 and beard  
 His eyes lay ambushed, on the watch for  
 fools,  
 Clear, gray, and glittering like two bay-  
 edged pools;  
 A shifty creature, with a turn for fun,  
 Could swap a poor horse for a better  
 one,—  
 He'd a high-stepper always in his stall;  
 Liked far and near, and dreaded there-  
 withal.  
 To him the in-comer, 'Perez, how d' ye  
 do?'  
 'Jest as I'm mind to, Obed; how do  
 you?'  
 Then, his eyes twinkling such swift  
 gleams as run  
 Along the levelled barrel of a gun  
 Brought to his shoulder by a man you  
 know  
 Will bring his game down, he continued,  
 'So,  
 I s'pose you're haulin' wood? But  
 you're too late;  
 The Deacon's off; Old Splitfoot could n't  
 wait;  
 He made a bee-line las' night in the storm  
 To where he won't need wood to keep  
 him warm.

'Fore this he 's treasurer of a fund to train  
 Young imps as missionaries; hopes to  
 gain  
 That way a contract that he has in view  
 For fireproof pitchforks of a pattern new.  
 It must have tickled him, all drawbacks  
 weighed,  
 To think he stuck the Old One in a  
 trade;  
 His soul, to start with, was n't worth a  
 carrot,  
 And all he'd left 'ould hardly serve to  
 swear at.'

"By this time Obed had his wits  
 thawed out,  
 And, looking at the other half in doubt,  
 Took off his fox-skin cap to scratch his  
 head,  
 Donned it again, and drawled forth,  
 'Mean he 's dead?'  
 'Jesso; he 's dead and t' other d that  
 follers  
 With folks that never love a thing but  
 dollars.  
 He pulled up stakes last evening, fair and  
 square,  
 And ever since there 's been a row Down  
 There.  
 The minute the old chap arrived, you see,  
 Comes the Boss-devil to him, and says he,  
 "What are you good at? Little enough,  
 I fear;  
 We callilate to make folks useful here."  
 "Well," says old Bitters, "I expect I  
 can  
 Scale a fair load of wood with e'er a  
 man."  
 "Wood we don't deal in; but perhaps  
 you'll suit,  
 Because we buy our brimstone by the  
 foot:  
 Here, take this measurin' rod, as smooth  
 as sin,  
 And keep a reckonin' of what loads  
 comes in.  
 You'll not want business, for we need a  
 lot  
 To keep the Yankees that you send us  
 hot;  
 At firin' up they 're barely half as spry  
 As Spaniards or Italians, though they 're  
 dry;  
 At first we have to let the draught on  
 stronger.  
 But, heat 'em through, they seem to hold  
 it longer."



"Bitters he took the rod, and pretty soon  
 A teamster comes, whistling an ex-psalm tune.  
 A likelier chap you would n't ask to see,  
 No different, but his limp, from you or me" —  
 'No different, Perez! Don't your memory fail?  
 Why, where in thunder was his horns and tail?'  
 'They're only worn by some old-fashioned pokes;  
 They mostly aim at looking just like folks.  
 Sech things are scarce as queues and top-boots here;  
 'T would spoil their usefulness to look too queer.  
 Ef you could always know 'em when they come,  
 They 'd get no purchase on you: now be mum.  
 On come the teamster, smart as Davy Crockett,  
 Jinglin' the red-hot coppers in his pocket,  
 And clost behind, ('t was gold-dust, you 'd ha' sworn,)  
 A load of sulphur yallow'er 'n seed-corn;  
 To see it wasted as it is Down There  
 Would make a Friction-Match Co. tear its hair!  
 "Hold on!" says Bitters, "stop right where you be;  
 You can't go in aout a pass from me."  
 "All right," says t' other, "only step round smart;  
 I must be home by noon-time with the cart."  
 Bitters goes round it sharp-eyed as a rat,  
 Then with a scrap of paper on his hat  
 Pretends to cipher. "By the public staff,  
 That load scarce rises twelve foot and a half."  
 "There's fourteen foot and over," says the driver,  
 "Worth twenty dollars, ef it's worth a stiver;  
 Good fourth-proof brimstone, that'll make 'em squirm, —  
 I leave it to the Headman of the Firm;  
 After we masure it, we always lay  
 Some on to allow for settlin' by the way.  
 Imp and full-grown, I've carted sulphur here,  
 And gi'n fair satisfaction, thirty year."  
 With that they fell to quarrellin' so loud

That in five minutes they had drawn a crowd,  
 And afore long the Boss, who heard the row,  
 Comes elbowin' in with "What's to pay here now?"  
 Both parties heard, the measurin'-rod he takes,  
 And of the load a careful survey makes.  
 "Sence I have bossed the business here," says he,  
 "No fairer load was ever seen by me."  
 Then, turnin' to the Deacon, "You mean cus,  
 None of your old Quompegan tricks with us!  
 They won't do here: we're plain old-fashioned folks,  
 And don't quite understand that kind o' jokes.  
 I know this teamster, and his pa afore him,  
 And the hard-working Mrs. D. that bore him;  
 He would n't soil his conscience with a lie,  
 Though he might get the custom-house thereby.  
 Here, constable, take Bitters by the queue,  
 And clap him into furnace ninety-two,  
 And try this brimstone on him; if he's bright,  
 He'll find the masure honest afore night.  
 He isn't worth his fuel, and I'll bet  
 The parish oven has to take him yet!"  
 "This is my tale, heard twenty years ago  
 From Uncle Reuben, as the logs burned low,  
 Touching the walls and ceiling with that bloom  
 That makes a rose's calyx of a room.  
 I could not give his language, where-through ran  
 The gamy flavor of the bookless man  
 Who shapes a word before the fancy cools,  
 As lonely Crusoe improvised his tools.  
 I liked the tale, — 't was like so many told  
 By Rutebeuf and his brother Trouvères bold;  
 Nor were the hearers much unlike to theirs,  
 Men unsophisticate, rude-nerved as bears.

**Ezra** is gone and his large-hearted kind,  
The landlords of the hospitable mind;  
Good Warriner of Springfield was the  
last;

An inn is now a vision of the past;  
One yet-surviving host my mind re-  
calls, —

You'll find him if you go to Trenton  
Falls."

#### THE ORIGIN OF DIDACTIC POETRY.

WHEN wise Minerva still was young  
And just the least romantic,  
Soon after from Jove's head she flung  
That preternatural antic,  
'T is said, to keep from idleness  
Or flirting, those twin curses,  
She spent her leisure, more or less,  
In writing po——, no, verses.

How nice they were! to rhyme with *far*  
A kind *star* did not tarry;  
The metre, too, was regular  
As schoolboy's dot and carry;  
And full they were of pious plums,  
So extra-super-moral, —  
For sucking Virtue's tender gums  
Most tooth-enticing coral.

A clean, fair copy she prepares,  
Makes sure of moods and tenses,  
With her own hand, — for prudence  
spares  
A man- (or woman-) -ensis;  
Complete, and tied with ribbons proud,  
She hinted soon how cosy a  
Treat it would be to read them loud  
After next day's Ambrosia.

The Gods thought not it would amuse  
So much as Homer's Odyssees,  
But could not very well refuse  
The properest of Goddesses:  
So all sat round in attitudes  
Of various dejection,  
As with a *hem!* the queen of prudes  
Began her grave prelection.

At the first pause Zeus said, "Well  
sung! —  
I mean — ask Phœbus, — *he* knows."  
Says Phœbus, "Zounds! a wolf's among  
Admetus's merinos!  
Fine! very fine! but I must go;  
They stand in need of me there;

Excuse me!" snatched his stick, and so  
Plunged down the gladdened ether.

With the next gap, Mars said, "For me  
Don't wait, — naught could be finer,  
But I'm engaged at half past three, —  
A fight in Asia Minor!"  
Then Venus lisped, "I'm sorely tried,  
These duty-calls are vip'rous;  
But I *must* go; I have a bride  
To see about in Cyprus."

Then Bacchus, — "I must say good bye,  
Although my peace it jeopardis;  
I meet a man at four, to try  
A well-broke pair of leopards."  
His words woke Hermes. "Ah!" he said,  
"I *so* love moral theses!"  
Then winked at Hebe, who turned red,  
And smoothed her apron's creases.

Just then Zeus snored, — the Eagle drew  
His head the wing from under;  
Zeus snored, — o'er startled Greece there  
flew  
The many-volumed thunder.  
Some augurs counted nine, some, ten;  
Some said 't was war, some, famine,  
And all, that other-minded men  
Would get a precious —.

Proud Pallas sighed, "It will not do;  
Against the Muse I've sinned, oh!"  
And her torn rhymes sent flying through  
Olympus's back window.  
Then, packing up a peplus clean,  
She took the shortest path thence,  
And opened, with a mind serene,  
A Sunday-school in Athens.

The verses? Some in ocean swilled,  
Killed every fish that bit to 'em;  
Some Galen caught, and, when distilled,  
Found morphine the residuum;  
But some that rotted on the earth  
Sprang up again in copies,  
And gave two strong narcotics birth,  
Didactic verse and poppies.

Years after, when a poet asked  
The Goddess's opinion,  
As one whose soul its wings had tasked  
In Art's clear-aired dominion,  
"Discriminate," she said, "betimes;  
The Muse is unforgiving;  
Put all your beauty in your rhymes,  
Your morals in your living."

## THE FLYING DUTCHMAN.

Don't believe in the Flying Dutchman ?  
I've known the fellow for years ;  
My button I've wrenched from his clutch,  
man :  
I shudder whenever he nears !

He's a Rip van Winkle skipper,  
A wandering Jew of the sea,  
Who sails his bedevilled old clipper  
In the wind's eye, straight as a bee.

Back topsails ! you can't escape him ;  
The man-ropes stretch with his weight,  
And the queerest old toggeries drape  
him,  
The Lord knows how long out of  
date !

Like a long-disembodied idea,  
(A kind of ghost plentiful now,)  
He stands there ; you fancy you see a  
Coeval of Teniers or Douw.

He greets you ; would have you take let-  
ters :  
You scan the addresses with dread,  
While he mutters his *donners* and *wet-  
ters*, —  
They're all from the dead to the dead !

You seem taking time for reflection,  
But the heart fills your throat with a  
jam,  
As you spell in each faded direction  
An ominous ending in *dam*.

Am I tagging my rhymes to a legend ?  
That were changing green turtle to  
mock :  
No, thank you ! I've found out which  
wedge-end  
Is meant for the head of a block.

The fellow I have in my mind's eye  
Plays the old Skipper's part here on  
shore,  
And sticks like a burr, till he finds I  
Have got just the gauge of his bore.

This postman 'twixt one ghost and t'  
other,  
With last dates that smell of the  
mould,  
I have met him (O man and brother,  
Forgive me !) in azure and gold.

In the pulpit I've known of his preach-  
ing,  
Out of hearing behind the time,  
Some statement of Balaam's impeach-  
ing,  
Giving Eve a due sense of her crime.

I have seen him some poor ancient thrash-  
ing  
Into something (God save us !) more  
dry,  
With the Water of Life itself washing  
The life out of earth, sea, and sky.

O dread fellow-mortal, get newer  
Despatches to carry, or none !  
We're as quick as the Greek and the Jew  
were  
At knowing a loaf from a stone.

Till the couriers of God fail in duty,  
We sha'n't ask a mummy for news,  
Nor sate the soul's hunger for beauty  
With your drawings from casts of a  
Muse.

## CREDIDIMUS JOVEM REGNARE.

O DAYS endeared to every Muse,  
When nobody had any Views,  
Nor, while the cloudscape of his mind  
By every breeze was new designed,  
Insisted all the world should see  
Camels or whales where none there be !  
O happy days, when men received  
From sire to son what all believed,  
And left the other world in bliss,  
Too busy with bedevilling this !

Beset by doubts of every breed  
In the last bastion of my creed,  
With shot and shell for Sabbath-chime,  
I watch the storming-party climb,  
Panting (their prey in easy reach),  
To pour triumphant through the breach  
In walls that shed like snowflakes tons  
Of missiles from old-fashioned guns,  
But crumble 'neath the storm that pours  
All day and night from bigger bores.  
There, as I hopeless watch and wait  
The last life-crushing coil of Fate,  
Despair finds solace in the praise  
Of those serene dawn-rosy days  
Ere microscopes had made us heirs  
To large estates of doubts and snares,  
By proving that the title-deeds,



Once all-sufficient for men's needs,  
 Are palimpsests that scarce disguise  
 The tracings of still earlier lies,  
 Themselves as surely written o'er  
 An older fib erased before.

So from these days I fly to those  
 That in the landlocked Past repose,  
 Where no rude wind of doctrine shakes  
 From bloom-flushed boughs untimely  
 flakes;

Where morning's eyes see nothing  
 strange,

No crude perplexity of change,  
 And morrows trip along their ways  
 Secure as happy yesterdays.

Then there were rulers who could trace  
 Through heroes up to gods their race,  
 Pledged to fair fame and noble use

By veins from Odin filled or Zeus,  
 And under bonds to keep divine

The praise of a celestial line.

Then priests could pile the altar's sods,  
 With whom gods spake as they with  
 gods,

And everywhere from haunted earth  
 Broke springs of wonder, that had birth  
 In depths divine beyond the ken

And fatal scrutiny of men ;  
 Then hills and groves and streams and  
 seas

Thrilled with immortal presences,  
 Not too ethereal for the scope  
 Of human passion's dream or hope.

Now Pan at last is surely dead,  
 And King No-Credit reigns instead,  
 Whose officers, morosely strict,  
 Poor Fancy's tenantry evict,  
 Chase the last Genius from the door,  
 And nothing dances any more.

Nothing ? Ah, yes, our tables do,  
 Drumming the Old One's own tattoo,  
 And, if the oracles are dumb,  
 Have we not mediums ? Why be glum ?

Fly thither ? Why, the very air  
 Is full of hindrance and despair !  
 Fly thither ? But I cannot fly ;  
 My doubts enmesh me if I try, —  
 Each lilliputian, but, combined,  
 Potent a giant's limbs to bind.

This world and that are growing dark ;  
 A huge interrogation mark,  
 The Devil's crook episcopal,  
 Still borne before him since the Fall,  
 Blackens with its ill-omened sign

The old blue heaven of faith benign.  
 Whence ? Whither ? Wherefore ? How ?  
 Which ? Why ?

All ask at once, all wait reply.  
 Men feel old systems cracking under  
 'em ;

Life saddens to a mere conundrum  
 Which once Religion solved, but she  
 Has lost — has Science found ? — the  
 key.

What was snow-bearded Odin, trow,  
 The mighty hunter long ago,  
 Whose horn and hounds the peasant  
 hears

Still when the Northlights shake their  
 spears ?  
 Science hath answers twain, I've heard ;  
 Choose which you will, nor hope a  
 third ;

Whichever box the truth be stowed in,  
 There's not a sliver left of Odin.  
 Either he was a pinchbrowed thing,  
 With scarcely wit a stone to fling,  
 A creature both in size and shape  
 Nearer than we are to the ape,  
 Who hung sublime with brat and spouse  
 By tail prehensile from the boughs,  
 And, happier than his maimed descend-  
 ants,

The culture-curtailed independents,  
 Could pluck his cherries with both paws,  
 And stuff with both his big-boned jaws ;  
 Or else the core his name enveloped  
 Was from a solar myth developed,  
 Which, hunted to its primal shoot,  
 Takes refuge in a Sanskrit root,  
 Thereby to instant death explaining  
 The little poetry remaining.

Try it with Zeus, 't is just the same ;  
 The thing evades, we hug a name ;  
 Nay, scarcely that, — perhaps a vapor  
 Born of some atmospheric caper.  
 All Lempriere's fables blur together  
 In cloudy symbols of the weather,  
 And Aphrodite rose from frothy seas  
 But to illustrate such hypotheses.  
 With years enough behind his back,  
 Lincoln will take the selfsame track,  
 And prove, hulled fairly to the cob,  
 A mere vagary of Old Prob.  
 Give the right man a solar myth,  
 And he'll confute the sun therewith.

They make things admirably plain,  
 But one hard question will remain'

If one hypothesis you lose,  
Another in its place you choose,  
But, your faith gone, O man and  
brother,

Whose shop shall furnish you another?  
One that will wash, I mean, and wear,  
And wrap us warmly from despair?  
While they are clearing up our puzzles,  
And clapping prophylactic muzzles  
On the Actæon's hounds that sniff  
Our devious track through But and If,  
Would they 'd explain away the Devil  
And other facts that won't keep level,  
But rise beneath our feet or fail,  
A reeling ship's deck in a gale!  
God vanished long ago, iwis,  
A mere subjective synthesis;  
A doll, stuffed out with hopes and fears,  
Too homely for us pretty dears,  
Who want one that conviction carries,  
Last make of London or of Paris.  
He gone, I felt a moment's spasm,  
But calmed myself with Protoplasm,  
A finer name, and, what is more,  
As enigmatic as before;  
Greek, too, and sure to fill with ease  
Minds caught in the Symplegades  
Of soul and sense, life's two conditions,  
Each baffled with its own omniscience.  
The men who labor to revise  
Our Bibles will, I hope, be wise,  
And print it without foolish qualms  
Instead of God in David's psalms:  
Noll had been more effective far  
Could he have shouted at Dunbar,  
"Rise, Protoplasm!" No dourert Scot  
Had waited for another shot.

And yet I frankly must confess  
A secret unforgivingness,  
And shudder at the saving chrism  
Whose best New Birth is Pessimism;  
My soul — I mean the bit of phosphorus,  
That fills the place of what that was for  
us —

Can't bid its inward bores defiance  
With the new nursery-tales of science.  
What profits me, though doubt by  
doubt,

As nail by nail, be driven out,  
When every new one, like the last,  
Still holds my coffin-lid as fast?  
Would I find thought a moment's truce,  
Give me the young world's Mother  
Goose

With life and joy in every limb,  
The chimney-corner tales of Grimm!

Our dear and admirable Huxley  
Cannot explain to me why ducks lay,  
Or rather, how into their eggs  
Blunder potential wings and legs  
With will to move them and decide  
Whether in air or lymph to glide.  
Who gets a hair's-breadth on by showing  
That Something Else set all agoing?  
Farther and farther back we push  
From Moses and his burning bush;  
Cry, "Art Thou there?" Above, below,  
All Nature mutters *yes* and *no*!  
'T is the old answer: we're agreed  
Being from Being must proceed,  
Life be Life's source. I might as well  
Obey the meeting-house's bell.  
And listen while Old Hundred pours  
Forth through the summer-opened doors,  
From old and young. I hear it yet,  
Swelled by bass-viol and clarinet,  
While the gray minister, with face  
Radiant, let loose his noble bass.  
If Heaven it reached not, yet its roll  
Waked all the echoes of the soul,  
And in it many a life found wings  
To soar away from sordid things.  
Church gone and singers too, the song  
Sings to me voiceless all night long,  
Till my soul beckons me afar,  
Glowing and trembling like a star.  
Will any scientific touch  
With my worn strings achieve as much?

I don't object, not I, to know  
My sires were monkeys, if 't was so;  
I touch my ear's collusive tip  
And own the poor-relationship.  
That apes of various shapes and sizes  
Contained their germs that all the prizes  
Of senate, pulpit, camp, and bar win  
May give us hopes that sweeten Darwin.  
Who knows but from our loins may  
spring  
(Long hence) some winged sweet-  
throated thing  
As much superior to us  
As we to Cynocephalus?

This is consoling, but, alas,  
It wipes no dimness from the glass  
Where I am flattening my poor nose,  
In hope to see beyond my toes.  
Though I accept my pedigree,  
Yet where, pray tell me, is the key  
That should unlock a private door  
To the Great Mystery, such no more?  
Each offers his, but one nor all

Are much persuasive with the wall  
That rises now, as long ago,  
Between I wonder and I know,  
Nor will vouchsafe a pin-hole peep  
At the veiled Isis in its keep.  
Where is no door, I but produce  
My key to find it of no use.  
Yet better keep it, after all,  
Since Nature's economical,  
And who can tell but some fine day  
(If it occur to her) she may,  
In her good-will to you and me,  
**Make** door and lock to match the key?

TEMPORA MUTANTUR.

**THE** world turns mild; democracy, they  
say,  
Rounds the sharp knobs of character  
away,  
And no great harm, unless at grave ex-  
pense  
Of what needs edge of proof, the moral  
sense;  
For man or race is on the downward  
path  
Whose fibre grows too soft for honest  
wrath,  
And there's a subtle influence that  
springs  
From words to modify our sense of  
things.  
A plain distinction grows obscure of  
late:  
Man, if he will, may pardon; but the  
State  
Forgets its function if not fixed as Fate.  
So thought our sires: a hundred years  
ago,  
If men were knaves, why, people called  
them so,  
And crime could see the prison-portal  
bend  
Its brow severe at no long vista's end.  
In those days for plain things plain words  
would serve;  
Men had not learned to admire the grace-  
ful swerve  
Wherewith the Æsthetic Nature's genial  
mood  
Makes public duty slope to private  
good;  
No muddled conscience raised the saving  
doubt:  
**A** soldier proved unworthy was drummed  
out;

An officer cashiered, a civil servant  
(No matter though his piety were fer-  
vent)  
Disgracefully dismissed, and through the  
land  
Each bore for life a stigma from the  
brand  
Whose far-heard hiss made others more  
averse  
To take the facile step from bad to  
worse.  
The Ten Commandments had a mean-  
ing then  
Felt in their bones by least considerate  
men,  
Because behind them Public Conscience  
stood,  
And without wincing made their man-  
dates good.  
But now that "Statesmanship" is just a  
way  
To dodge the primal curse and make it  
pay,  
Since office means a kind of patent drill  
To force an entrance to the Nation's  
till,  
And speculation something rather less  
Risky than if you spelt it with an *s*;  
Now that to steal by law is grown an  
art,  
Whom rogues the sires, their milder  
sons call smart,  
And "slightly irregular" dilutes the  
shame  
Of what had once a somewhat blunter  
name,  
With generous curve we draw the moral  
line:  
Our swindlers are permitted to resign;  
Their guilt is wrapped in deferential  
names,  
And twenty sympathize for one that  
blames.  
Add national disgrace to private crime,  
Confront mankind with brazen front  
sublime,  
Steal but enough, the world is un-  
severe,—  
Tweed is a statesman, Fisk a financier;  
Invent a mine, and be — the Lord knows  
what;  
Secure, at any rate, with what you've  
got.  
The public servant who has stolen or  
lied,  
If called on, may resign with honest  
pride:



As unjust favor put him in, why doubt  
 Disfavor as unjust has turned him out?  
 Even if indicted, what is that but fudge  
 To him who counted - in the elective  
 judge?

Whitewashed, he quits the politician's  
 strife

At ease in mind, with pockets filled for  
 life:

His "lady" glares with gems whose  
 vulgar blaze

The poor man through his heightened  
 taxes pays,

Himself content if one huge Kohinoor  
 Bulge from a shirt-front ampler than  
 before,

But not too candid, lest it haply tend  
 To rouse suspicion of the People's  
 Friend.

A public meeting, treated at his cost,  
 Resolves him back more virtue than he  
 lost;

With character regilt he counts his  
 gains;

What 's gone was air, the solid good re-  
 mains;

For what is good, except what friend and  
 foe

Seem quite unanimous in thinking so,  
 The stocks and bonds which, in our age  
 of loans,

Replace the stupid pagan's stocks and  
 stones?

With choker white, wherein no cynic  
 eye

Dares see idealized a hempen tie,  
 At parish-meetings he conducts in  
 prayer,

And pays for missions to be sent else-  
 where;

On 'Change respected, to his friends en-  
 deared,

Add but a Sunday-school-class, he 's re-  
 vered,

And his too early tomb will not be dumb  
 To point a moral for our youth to  
 come.

1872.

#### IN THE HALF-WAY HOUSE.

##### I.

At twenty we fancied the blest Middle  
 Ages

A spirited cross of romantic and  
 grand,

All templars and minstrels and ladies  
 and pages,

And love and adventure in Outre-Mer  
 land;

But ah, where the youth dreamed of  
 building a minster,

The man takes a pew and sits reckon-  
 ing his pelf,

And the Graces wear fronts, the Muse  
 thins to a spinster

When Middle-Age stares from one's  
 glass at oneself!

##### II.

Do you twit me with days when I had  
 an Ideal,

And saw the sear future through  
 spectacles green?

Then find me some charm, while I look  
 round and see all

These fat friends of forty, shall keep  
 me nineteen;

Should we go on pining for chaplets of  
 laurel

Who 've paid a perruquier for mend-  
 ing our thatch,

Or, our feet swathed in baize, with our  
 Fate pick a quarrel,

If, instead of cheap bay-leaves, she  
 sent a dear scratch?

##### III.

We called it our Eden, that small patent-  
 baker,

When life was half moonshine and half  
 Mary Jane;

But the butcher, the baker, the candle-  
 stick-maker! —

Did Adam have duns and slip down a  
 back-lane?

Nay, after the Fall did the modiste keep  
 coming

With last styles of fig-leaf to Madam  
 Eve's bower?

Did Jubal, or whoever taught the girls  
 thrumming,

Make the patriarchs deaf at a dollar  
 the hour?

##### IV.

As I think what I was, I sigh *Desunt*  
*nonnulla!*

Years are creditors Sheridan's self  
 could not bilk;

But then, as my boy says, "What right  
 has a fullah

To ask for the cream, when himself  
 spilt the milk?"  
 Perhaps when you're older, my lad,  
 you'll discover  
 The secret with which Auld Lang  
 Syne there is gilt,—  
 Superstition of old man, maid, poet, and  
 lover,—  
 That cream rises thickest on milk that  
 was spilt!

## V.

We sailed for the moon, but, in sad  
 disillusion,  
 Sung under Point Comfort are glad to  
 make fast,  
 And strive (sans our glasses) to make a  
 confusion  
 'Twixt our rind of green cheese and  
 the moon of the past.  
 Ah, Might-have-been, Could-have-been,  
 Would-have-been! rascals,  
 He's a genius or fool whom ye cheat  
 at twoscore,  
 And the man whose boy-promise was  
 likened to Pascal's  
 Is thankful at forty they don't call him  
 bore!

## VI.

With what fumes of fame was each con-  
 fident pate full!  
 How rates of insurance should rise on  
 the Charles!  
 And which of us now would not feel  
 wisely grateful,  
 If his rhymes sold as fast as the Em-  
 blems of Quarles?  
 E'en if won, what's the good of Life's  
 medals and prizes?  
 The rapture's in what never was or is  
 gone;  
 That we missed them makes Helens of  
 plain Ann Elizys,  
 For the goose of To-day still is Mem-  
 ory's swan.

## VII.

And yet who would change the old  
 dream for new treasure?  
 Make not youth's sourest grapes the  
 best wine of our life?  
 Need he reckon his date by the Almanac's  
 measure  
 Who is twenty life-long in the eyes of  
 his wife?

Ah, Fate, should I live to be nonagen-  
 arian,  
 Let me still take Hope's frail I. O. U.s  
 upon trust,  
 Still talk of a trip to the Islands Macarian,  
 And still climb the dream-tree for —  
 ashes and dust!

## AT THE BURNS CENTENNIAL

JANUARY, 1859.

## I.

A HUNDRED years! they're quickly fled,  
 With all their joy and sorrow;  
 Their dead leaves shed upon the dead,  
 Their fresh ones sprung by morrow!  
 And still the patient seasons bring  
 Their change of sun and shadow;  
 New birds still sing with every spring,  
 New violets spot the meadow.

## II.

A hundred years! and Nature's powers  
 No greater grown nor lessened!  
 They saw no flowers more sweet than  
 ours,  
 No fairer new moon's crescent.  
 Would she but treat us poets so,  
 So from our winter free us,  
 And set our slow old sap aflow  
 To sprout in fresh ideas!

## III.

Alas, think I, what worth or parts  
 Have brought me here competing,  
 To speak what starts in myriad hearts  
 With Burns's memory beating!  
 Himself had loved a theme like this,  
 Must I be its entomber?  
 No pen save his but 's sure to miss  
 Its pathos or its humor.


## IV.

As I sat musing what to say,  
 And how my verse to number,  
 Some elf in play passed by that way,  
 And sank my lids in slumber;  
 And on my sleep a vision stole,  
 Which I will put in metre,  
 Of Burns's soul at the wicket-hole  
 Where sits the good Saint Peter.

## V.

The saint, methought, had left his post  
 That day to Holy Willie,

Who swore, "Each ghost that comes  
shall toast

In brunstane, will he, nill he ;  
There 's nane need hope with phrases fine  
Their score to wipe a sin frae ;  
I 'll chalk a sign, to save their tryin', —  
A hand  and ' *Vide infra!* "

## VI.

Alas! no soil 's too cold or dry  
For spiritual small potatoes,  
Scrimped natures, spy the trade to ply  
Of *diaboli advocatus* ;  
Who lay bent pins in the penance-stool  
Where Mercy plumps a cushion,  
Who 've just one rule for knave and fool,  
It saves so much confusion !

## VII.

So when Burns knocked, Will knit his  
brows,  
His window gap made scunter,  
And said, "Go rouse the other house ;  
We lodge no Tam O'Shanter !"  
"We lodge!" laughed Burns. "Now  
well I see  
Death cannot kill old nature ;  
No human flea but thinks that he  
May speak for his Creator !

## VIII.

"But, Willie, friend, don't turn me  
forth,  
Auld Clottie needs no gauger ;  
And if on earth I had small worth,  
You 've let in worse, I 'se wager !"  
"Na, nane has knockit at the yett  
But found me hard as whunstane ;  
There 's chances yet your bread to get  
Wi Auld Nick, gaugin' brunstane."

## IX.

Meanwhile, the Unco' Gnid had ta'en  
Their place to watch the process,  
Flattening in vain on many a pane  
Their disembodied noses.  
Remember, please, 't is all a dream ;  
One can't control the fancies  
Through sleep that stream with way-  
ward gleam,  
Like midnight's boreal dances.

## X.

Old Willie's tone grew sharp 's a knife :  
" *In primis*, I indite ye,

For makin' strife wi' the water o' life,  
And preferrin' *aqua vita!*"  
Then roared a voice with lusty din,  
Like a skipper's when 't is blowy,  
"If *that* 's a sin, I 'd ne'er got in,  
As sure as my name 's Noah !"

## XI.

Balked, Willie turned another leaf, —  
"There 's many here have heard ye,  
To the pain and grief o' true belief,  
Say hard things o' the clergy !"  
Then rang a clear tone over all, —  
"One plea for him allow me :  
I once heard call from o'er me, 'Saul,  
Why persecutest thou me ?'"

## XII.

To the next charge vexed Willie turned,  
And, sighing, wiped his glasses :  
"I 'm much concerned to find ye  
yearned  
O'er-warmly tow'rd the lasses !"  
Here David sighed ; poor Willie's face  
Lost all its self-possession :  
"I leave this case to God's own grace :  
It baffles *my* discretion !"

## XIII.

Then sudden glory round me broke,  
And low melodious surges  
Of wings whose stroke to splendor woke  
Creation's farthest verges ;  
A cross stretched, ladder-like, secure  
From earth to heaven's own portal,  
Whereby God's poor, with footing sure,  
Climbed up to peace immortal.

## XIV.

I heard a voice serene and low  
(With my heart I seemed to hear it)  
Fall soft and slow as snow on snow,  
Like grace of the heavenly spirit ;  
As sweet as over new-born son  
The croon of new-made mother,  
The voice begun, "Sore tempted one !"  
Then, pausing, sighed, "Our brother !

## XV.

"I' not a sparrow fall, unless  
The Father sees and knows it,  
Think! recks He less His form express,  
The soul His own deposit ?  
If only dear to Him the strong,  
That never trip nor wander,



Where were the throng whose morning  
song  
 Thrills His blue arches yonder ?

## XVI.

\* Do souls alone clear-eyed, strong-  
 kneed,  
 To Him true service render,  
 And they who need His hand to lead,  
 Find they His heart untender ?  
 Through all your various ranks and fates  
 He opens doors to duty,  
 And he that waits there at your gates  
 Was servant of His Beauty.

## XVII.

"The Earth must richer sap secrete,  
 (Could ye in time but know it !)  
 Must juice concrete with fiercer heat,  
 Ere she can make her poet ;  
 Long generations go and come,  
 At last she bears a singer,  
 For ages dumb of senses numb  
 The compensation-bringer !

## XVIII.

"Her cheaper broods in palaces  
 She raises under glasses,  
 But souls like these, heav'n's hostages,  
 Spring shelterless as grasses :  
 They share Earth's blessing and her  
 bane,  
 The common sun and shower ;  
 What makes your pain to them is gain,  
 Your weakness is their power.

## XIX.

"These larger hearts must feel the rolls  
 Of stormier-waved temptation ;  
 These star-wide souls between their  
 poles  
 Bear zones of tropic passion.  
 He loved much ! — that is gospel good,  
 Howe'er the text you handle ;  
 From common wood the cross was  
 hewed,  
 By love turned priceless sandal.

## XX.

"If scant his service at the kirk,  
 He *paters* heard and *aves*  
 From choirs that lurk in hedge and  
 birk,  
 From blackbird and from mavis ;  
 The cowering mouse, poor unroofed  
 thing,

In him found Mercy's angel ;  
 The daisy's ring brought every spring  
 To him Love's fresh evangel !

## XXI.

"Not he the threatening texts who  
 deals  
 Is highest 'mong the preachers,  
 But he who feels the woes and weals  
 Of all God's wandering creatures.  
 He doth good work whose heart can  
 find  
 The spirit 'neath the letter ;  
 Who makes his kind of happier mind,  
 Leaves wiser men and better.

## XXII.

"They make Religion be abhorred  
 Who round with darkness gulf her,  
 And think no word can please the Lord  
 Unless it smell of sulphur.  
 Dear Poet-heart, that childlike guessed  
 The Father's loving kindness,  
 Come now to rest ! 'thou didst His heat,  
 If haply 't was in blindness !"

## XXIII.

Then leapt heaven's portals wide apart,  
 And at their golden thunder  
 With sudden start I woke, my heart  
 Still throbbing-full of wonder.  
 "Father," I said, " 't is known to Thee  
 How Thou thy Saints preparest ;  
 But this I see, — Saint Charity  
 Is still the first and fairest !"

## XXIV.

Dear Bard and Brother ! let who may  
 Against thy faults be railing,  
 (Though far, I pray, from us be they  
 That never had a failing !)  
 One toast I 'll give, and that not long,  
 Which thou wouldst pledge if pres-  
 ent, —  
 To him whose song, in nature strong,  
 Makes man of prince and peasant !

## IN AN ALBUM.

THE misspelt scrawl, upon the wall  
 By some Pompeian idler traced,  
 In ashes packed (ironic fact !)  
 Lies eighteen centuries uneffaced,  
 While many a page of bard and sage,  
 Deemed once mankind's immortal gain,

Lost from Time's ark, leaves no more  
mark  
Than a keel's furrow through the main.

O Chance and Change! our buzz's  
range

Is scarcely wider than a fly's;  
Then let us play at fame to-day,  
To-morrow be unknown and wise;  
And while the fair beg locks of hair,  
And autographs, and Lord knows what,  
Quick! let us scratch our moment's  
match,  
Make our brief blaze, and be forgot!

Too pressed to wait, upon her slate  
Fame writes a name or two in doubt;  
Scarce written, these no longer please,  
And her own finger rubs them out:  
It may ensue, fair girl, that you  
Years hence this yellowing leaf may  
see,  
And put to task, your memory ask  
In vain, "This Lowell, who was he?"

AT THE COMMENCEMENT DINNER,  
1866. IN ACKNOWLEDGING A TOAST  
TO THE SMITH PROFESSOR.

I RISE, Mr. Chairman, as both of us  
know,  
With the impromptu I promised you  
three weeks ago,  
Dragged up to my doom by your might  
and my mane,  
To do what I vowed I'd do never again;  
And I feel like your good honest dough  
when possest  
By a stirring, impertinent devil of yeast.  
"You must rise," says the leaven. "I  
can't," says the dough;  
"Just examine my bumps and you'll  
see it's no go."  
"But you must," the tormentor insists,  
" 't is all right;  
You must rise when I bid you, and,  
what's more, be light."

'T is a dreadful oppression, this making  
men speak  
What they're sure to be sorry for all  
the next week;  
Some poor stick requesting, like Aaron's,  
to bud  
Into eloquence, pathos, or wit in cold  
blood,

As if the dull brain that you vented  
your spite on  
Could be got, like an ox, by mere pok-  
ing, to Brighton.

They say it is wholesome to rise with the  
sun,  
And I dare say it may be if not over-  
done;

(I think it was Thomson who made the  
remark

'T was an excellent thing in its way —  
for a lark;)

But to rise after dinner and look down  
the meeting

On a distant (as Gray calls it) prospect  
of Eating,

With a stomach half full and a cerebrum  
hollow

As the tortoise-shell ere it was strung for  
Apollo,

Under contract to raise anerithmon  
gelasma

With rhymes so hard hunted they gasp  
with the asthma,

And jokes not much younger than  
Jethro's phylacteries,

Is something I leave you yourselves to  
characterize.

I've a notion, I think, of a good dinner  
speech,

Tripping light as a sandpiper over the  
beach,

Swerving this way and that as the wave  
of the moment

Washes out its slight trace with a dash  
of whim's foam on 't,

And leaving on memory's rim just a sense  
Something graceful had gone by, a live

present tense;  
Not poetry, — no, not quite that, but as

good,  
A kind of winged prose that could fly if

it would.  
'T is a time for gay fancies as fleeting  
and vain

As the whisper of foam-beads on fresh-  
poured champagne,

Since dinners were not perhaps strictly  
designed

For maneuvering the heavy dragoons of  
the mind.

When I hear your set speeches that start  
with a pop,

Then wander and maunder, too feeble to  
stop,

With a vague apprehension from popular  
 rumor  
 There used to be something by mortals  
 called humor,  
 Beginning again when you thought they  
 were done,  
 Respectable, sensible, weighing a ton,  
 And as near to the present occasions of  
 men  
 As a Fast Day discourse of the year  
 eighteen ten,  
 I — well, I sit still, and my sentiments  
 smother,  
 For am I not also a bore and a brother ?  
 And a toast, — what should that be ?  
 Light, airy, and free,  
 The foam-Aphrodite of Bacchus's sea,  
 A fancy-tinged bubble, an orb'd rain-  
 bow-stain,  
 That floats for an instant 'twixt goblet  
 and brain ;  
 A breath-born perfection, half something,  
 half naught,  
 And breaks if it strike the hard edge of  
 a thought.  
 Do you ask me to make such ? Ah no,  
 not so simple ;  
 Ask Apelles to paint you the ravishing  
 dimple  
 Whose shifting enchantment lights Ve-  
 nus's cheek,  
 And the artist will tell you his skill is  
 to seek ;  
 Once fix it, 't is naught, for the charm of  
 it rises  
 From the sudden bopeeps of its smiling  
 surprises.  
 I've tried to define it, but what mother's  
 son  
 Could ever yet do what he knows should  
 be done ?  
 My rocket has burst, and I watch in the  
 air  
 Its fast-fading heart's-blood drop back in  
 despair ;  
 Yet one chance is left me, and, if I am  
 quick,  
 I can palm off, before you suspect me,  
 the stick.

Now since I've succeeded — I pray do  
 not frown —  
 To Ticknor's and Longfellow's classical  
 gown,  
 And profess four strange languages,  
 which, luckless elf,  
 I speak like a native (of Cambridge)  
 myself,  
 Let me beg, Mr. President, leave to  
 propose  
 A sentiment treading on nobody's toes,  
 And give, in such ale as with pump-  
 handles we brew,  
 Their memory who saved us from all  
 talking Hebrew, —  
 A toast that to deluge with water is  
 good,  
 For in Scripture they come in just after  
 the flood :  
 I give you the men but for whom, as I  
 guess, sir,  
 Modern languages ne'er could have had  
 a professor,  
 The builders of Babel, to whose zeal the  
 lungs  
 Of the children of men owe confusion of  
 tongues ;  
 And a name all-embracing I couple there-  
 with,  
 Which is that of my founder — the late  
 Mr. Smith.

## A PARABLE.

AN ass munched thistles, while a night-  
 ingale  
 From passion's fountain flooded all the  
 vale.  
 "Hee-haw!" cried he, "I hearken," as  
 who knew  
 For such ear-largess humble thanks were  
 due.  
 "Friend," said the wingèd pain, "in vain  
 you bray,  
 Who tunnels bring, not cisterns, for my  
 lay ;  
 None but his peers the poet rightly hear,  
 Nor mete we listeners by their length of  
 ear."

COLONNA, ITALY, 1852.



## V. EPIGRAMS.

### SAYINGS.

1.

In life's small things be resolute and great  
To keep thy muscle trained: know'st  
thou when Fate  
Thy measure takes, or when she 'll say  
to thee,  
"I find thee worthy; do this deed for  
me"?

2.

A camel-driver, angry with his drudge,  
Beating him, called him hunchback; to  
the hind  
Thus spake a dervish: "Friend, the  
Eternal Judge  
Dooms not His work, but ours, the  
crooked mind."

3.

Swiftly the politic goes: is it dark? — he  
borrows a lantern;  
Slowly the statesman and sure, guiding  
his steps by the stars.

4.

"Where lies the capital, pilgrim, seat of  
who governs the Faithful?"  
"Thither my footsteps are bent: it is  
where Saadi is lodged."

### INSCRIPTIONS.

FOR A BELL AT CORNELL UNIVERSITY.

I CALL as fly the irrevocable hours,  
Futile as air or strong as fate to make  
Your lives of sand or granite; awful  
powers,  
Even as men choose, they either give  
or take.

FOR A MEMORIAL WINDOW TO SIR WAL-  
TER RALEIGH, SET UP IN ST. MAR-  
GARET'S, WESTMINSTER, BY AMERI-  
CAN CONTRIBUTORS.

THE New World's sons, from England's  
breasts we drew  
Such milk as bids remember whence  
we came;  
Proud of her Past wherefrom our Pres-  
ent grew,  
This window we inscribe with Raleigh's  
name.

PROPOSED FOR A SOLDIERS' AND SAIL-  
ORS' MONUMENT IN BOSTON.

To those who died for her on land and sea,  
That she might have a country great  
and free,  
Boston builds this: build ye her monu-  
ment  
In lives like theirs, at duty's summons  
spent.

### A MISCONCEPTION.

B, TAUGHT by Pope to do his good by  
stealth,  
'Twixt participle and noun no difference  
feeling,  
In office placed to serve the Common-  
wealth,  
Does himself all the good he can by  
stealing.

### THE BOSS.

SKILLED to pull wires, he baffles Nature's  
hope,  
Who sure intended him to stretch a  
rope.

## SUN-WORSHIP.

IF I were the rose at your window,  
 Happiest rose of its crew,  
 Every blossom I bore would bend in-  
 ward,  
*They'd* know where the sunshine grew.

## CHANGED PERSPECTIVE.

FULL oft the pathway to her door  
 I've measured by the selfsame track,  
 Yet doubt the distance more and more.  
 'T is so much longer coming back !

WITH A PAIR OF GLOVES LOST IN  
A WAGER.

WE wagered, she for sunshine, I for rain,  
 And I should hint sharp practice if I  
 dared ;

For was not she beforehand sure to gain  
 Who made the sunshine we together  
 shared ?

## SIXTY-EIGHTH BIRTHDAY.

As life runs on, the road grows strange  
 With faces new, and near the end  
 The milestones into headstones change,  
 'Neath every one a friend.

## INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT.

IN vain we call old notions fudge,  
 And bend our conscience to our deal-  
 ing ;  
 The Ten Commandments will not budge,  
 And stealing will continue stealing.

## LAST POEMS.

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THE following note was prefixed to this group when published in 1895: "This little volume contains those of the poems which Mr. Lowell wrote in his last years which, I believe, he might have wished to preserve. Three of them were published before his death. Of the rest, two appear here for the first time. C. E. N."

### HOW I CONSULTED THE ORACLE OF THE GOLDFISHES.

WHAT know we of the world immense  
Beyond the narrow ring of sense?  
What should we know, who lounge about  
The house we dwell in, nor find out,  
Masked by a wall, the secret cell  
Where the soul's priests in hiding dwell?  
The winding stair that steals aloof  
To chapel-mysteries 'neath the roof?

It lies about us, yet as far  
From sense sequestered as a star  
New launched its wake of fire to trace  
In secrecies of unprobed space,  
Whose beacon's lightning-pinioned  
spears

Might earthward haste a thousand years  
Nor reach it. So remote seems this  
World undiscovered, yet it is  
A neighbor near and dumb as death,  
So near, we seem to feel the breath  
Of its hushed habitants as they  
Pass us unchallenged, night and day.

Never could mortal ear nor eye  
By sound or sign suspect them nigh,  
Yet why may not some subtler sense  
Than those poor two give evidence?  
Transfuse the ferment of their being  
Into our own, past hearing, seeing,  
As men, if once attempered so,  
Far off each other's thought can know?  
As horses with an instant thrill  
Measure their rider's strength of will?  
Comes not to all some glimpse that  
brings  
Strange sense of sense-escaping things?

Wraiths some transfigured nerve di-  
vines?

Approaches, premonitions, signs,  
Voices of Ariel that die out  
In the dim No Man's Land of Doubt?

Are these Night's dusky birds? Are these  
Phantasmas of the silences  
Outer or inner? — rude heirlooms  
From grovellers in the cavern-glooms,  
Who in unhuman Nature saw  
Misshapen foes with tusk and claw,  
And with those night-fears brute and  
blind

Peopled the chaos of their mind,  
Which, in ungovernable hours,  
Still make their bestial lair in ours?

Were they, or were they not? Yes;  
no;

Uncalled they come, unbid they go,  
And leave us fumbling in a doubt  
Whether within us or without  
The spell of this illusion be  
That witches us to hear and see  
As in a twi-life what it will,  
And hath such wonder-working skill  
That what we deemed most solid-  
wrought

Turns a mere figment of our thought,  
Which when we grasp at in despair  
Our fingers find vain semblance there,  
For Psyche seeks a corner-stone  
Firmier than aught to matter known.

Is it illusion? Dream-stuff? Show  
Made of the wish to have it so?  
'T were something, even though this  
were all:



So the poor prisoner, on his wall  
 Long gazing, from the chance designs  
 Of crack, mould, weather-stain, refines  
 New and new pictures without cease,  
 Landscape, or saint, or altar-piece :  
 But these are Fancy's common brood  
 Hatched in the nest of solitude ;  
 This is Dame Wish's hourly trade,  
 By our rude sires a goddess made.  
 Could longing, though its heart broke,

give  
 Trances in which we chiefly live ?  
 Moments that darken all beside,  
 Tearfully radiant as a bride ?  
 Beckonings of bright escape, of wings  
 Purchased with loss of baser things ?  
 Blithe trauancies from all control  
 Of Hylë, outings of the soul ?

The worm, by trustful instinct led,  
 Draws from its womb a slender thread,  
 And drops, confiding that the breeze  
 Will waft it to unpastured trees :  
 So the brain spins itself, and so  
 Swings boldly off in hope to blow  
 Across some tree of knowledge, fair  
 With fruitage new, none else shall share :  
 Sated with wavering in the Void,  
 It backward climbs, so best employed,  
 And, where no proof is nor can be,  
 Seeks refuge with Analogy ;  
 Truth's soft half-sister, she may tell  
 Where lurks, seld-sought, the other's  
 well.

With metaphysic midges sore,  
 My Thought seeks comfort at her door,  
 And, at her feet a suppliant cast,  
 Evokes a spectre of the past.  
 Not such as shook the knees of Saul,  
 But winsome, golden-gay withal, —  
 Two fishes in a globe of glass,  
 That pass, and waver, and re-pass,  
 And lighten that way, and then this, †  
 Silent as meditation is.

With a half-humorous smile I see  
 In this their aimless industry,  
 These errands nowhere and returns  
 Grave as a pair of funeral urns,  
 This ever-seek and never-find,  
 A mocking image of my mind.  
 But not for this I bade you climb  
 Up from the darkening deeps of time :  
 Help me to tame these wild day-mares  
 That sudden on me unawares.  
 Fish, do your duty, as did they  
 Of the Black Island far away  
 In life's safe places, — far as you

From all that now I see or do.  
 You come, embodied flames, as when  
 I knew you first, nor yet knew men ;  
 Your gold renews my golden days,  
 Your splendor all my loss repays.

'T is more than sixty years ago  
 Since first I watched your to-and-fro ;  
 Two generations come and gone  
 From silence to oblivion,  
 With all their noisy strife and stress  
 Lulled in the grave's forgivingness,  
 While you unquenchably survive  
 Immortal, almost more alive.  
 I watched you then a curious boy,  
 Who in your beauty found full joy,  
 And, by no problem-debts distrest,  
 Sate at life's board a welcome guest.  
 You were my sister's pets, not mine ;  
 But Property's dividing line  
 No hint of dispossession drew  
 On any map my simplexse knew ;  
 O golden age, not yet dethroned !  
 What made me happy, that I owned ;  
 You were my wonders, you my Lars,  
 In darkling days my sun and stars,  
 And over you entranced I hung,  
 Too young to know that I was young.  
 Gazing with still unsated bliss,  
 My fancies took some shape like this :  
 " I have my world, and so have you,  
 A tiny universe for two,  
 A bubble by the artist blown,  
 Scarcely more fragile than our own,  
 Where you have all a whale could wish,  
 Happy as Eden's primal fish.  
 Manna is dropt you thrice a day  
 From some kind heaven not far away,  
 And still you snatch its softening  
 crumbs,  
 Nor, more than we, think whence it  
 comes.  
 No toil seems yours but to explore  
 Your cloistered realm from shore to  
 shore ;  
 Sometimes you trace its limits round,  
 Sometimes its limpid depths you sound,  
 Or hover motionless midway,  
 Like gold-red clouds at set of day ;  
 Erelong you whirl with sudden whim  
 Off to your globe's most distant rim,  
 Where, greated by the watery lens,  
 Methinks no dragon of the fens  
 Flashed huger scales against the sky,  
 Roused by Sir Bevis or Sir Guy,  
 And the one eye that meets my view,  
 Lidless and strangely largening, too,

Like that of conscience in the dark,  
 Seems to make me its single mark.  
 What a benignant lot is yours  
 That have an own All-out-of-doors,  
 No words to spell, no sums to do,  
 No Nepos and no parlyvoo!  
 How happy you without a thought  
 Of such cross things as Must and  
     Ought, —  
 I too the happiest of boys  
 To see and share your golden joys!"

So thought the child, in simpler words,  
 Of you his funny flocks and herds;  
 Now, an old man, I bid you rise  
 To the fine sight behind the eyes,  
 And, lo, you float and flash again  
 In the dark cistern of my brain.  
 But o'er your visioned flames I brood  
 With other mien, in other mood;  
 You are no longer there to please,  
 But to stir argument, and tease  
 My thought with all the ghostly shapes  
 From which no moody man escapes.  
 Diminished creature, I no more  
 Find Fairyland beside my door,  
 But for each moment's pleasure pay  
 With the *quart d'heure* of Rabelais!

I watch you in your crystal sphere,  
 And wonder if you see and hear  
 Those shapes and sounds that stir the  
     wide

Conjecture of the world outside;  
 In your pent lives, as we in ours,  
 Have you surmises dim of powers,  
 Of presences obscurely shown,  
 Of lives a riddle to your own,  
 Just on the senses' outer verge,  
 Where sense-nerves into soul nerves  
     merge,

Where we conspire our own deceit  
 Confederate in deft Fancy's feat,  
 And the fooled brain befools the eyes  
 With pageants woven of its own lies?  
 But *are* they lies? Why more than  
     those

Phantoms that startle your repose,  
 Half seen, half heard, then flit away,  
 And leave you your prose-bounded day?

The things ye see as shadows I  
 Know to be substance; tell me why  
 My visions, like those haunting you,  
 May not be as substantial too.  
 Alas, who ever answer heard  
 From fish, and dream-fish too? Absurd!

Your consciousness I half divine,  
 But you are wholly deaf to mine.  
 Go, I dismiss you; ye have done  
 All that ye could; our silk is spun:  
 Dive back into the deep of dreams,  
 Where what is real is what seems!  
 Yet I shall fancy till my grave  
 Your lives to mine a lesson gave;  
 If lesson none, an image, then,  
 Impeaching self-conceit in men  
 Who put their confidence alone  
 In what they call the Seen and Known.  
 How seen? How known? As through  
     your glass

Our wavering apparitions pass  
 Perplexingly, then subtly wrought  
 To some quite other thing by thought.  
 Here shall my resolution be:  
 The shadow of the mystery  
 Is haply wholesomer for eyes  
 That cheat us to be overwise,  
 And I am happy in my right  
 To love God's darkness as His light.

#### TURNER'S OLD TÊMÉRAIRE.

##### UNDER A FIGURE SYMBOLIZING THE CHURCH.

THOU wast the fairest of all man-made  
 things;  
 The breath of heaven bore up thy cloudy  
 wings,  
 And, patient in their triple rank,  
 The thunders crouched about thy flank,  
 Their black lips silent with the doom of  
 kings.

The storm-wind loved to rock him in  
 thy pines,  
 And swell thy vans with breath of great  
 designs;  
 Long-wildered pilgrims of the main  
 By thee relaid their course again,  
 Whose prow was guided by celestial  
 signs.

How didst thou trample on tumultuous  
 seas,  
 Or, like some basking sea-beast stretched  
 at ease,  
 Let the bull-fronted surges glide  
 Caressingly along thy side,  
 Like glad hounds leaping by the hunts-  
 man's knees!

Heroic feet, with fire of genius shod,  
 In battle's ecstasy thy deck have trod,  
 While from their touch a fulgor ran  
 Through plank and spar, from man to  
 man,  
 Welding thee to a thunderbolt of God.

Now a black demon, belching fire and  
 steam,  
 Drags thee away, a pale, dismantled  
 dream,  
 And all thy desecrated bulk  
 Must landlocked lie, a helpless hulk,  
 To gather weeds in the regardless  
 stream.

Woe's me, from Ocean's sky-horizoned  
 air  
 To this! Better, the flame-cross still  
 aflame,  
 Shot-shattered to have met thy doom  
 Where thy last lightnings cheered the  
 gloom,  
 Than here be safe in dangerless de-  
 spair.

Thy drooping symbol to the flagstaff  
 clings,  
 Thy rudder soothes the tide to lazy  
 rings,  
 Thy thunders now but birthdays greet,  
 Thy planks forget the martyrs' feet,  
 Thy masts what challenges the sea-wind  
 brings.

Thou a mere hospital, where human  
 wrecks,  
 Like winter-flies, crawl those renown'd  
 decks,  
 Ne'er trodden save by captive foes,  
 And wonted sternly to impose  
 God's will and thine on bowed imperial  
 necks!

Shall nevermore, engendered of thy  
 fame,  
 A new sea-eagle heir thy conqueror  
 name,  
 And with commissioned talons wrench  
 From thy supplanter's grimy clench  
 His sheath of steel, his wings of smoke  
 and flame?

This shall the pleased eyes of our chil-  
 dren see;  
 For this the stars of God long even as  
 we;

Earth listens for his wings; the Fates  
 Expectant lean; Faith cross-propt waits,  
 And the tired waves of Thought's insur-  
 gent sea.

## ST. MICHAEL THE WEIGHER.

STOOD the tall Archangel weighing  
 All man's dreaming, doing, saying,  
 All the failure and the pain,  
 All the triumph and the gain,  
 In the unimagined years,  
 Full of hopes, more full of tears,  
 Since old Adam's hopeless eyes  
 Backward searched for Paradise,  
 And, instead, the flame-blade saw  
 Of inexorable Law.

Waking, I beheld him there,  
 With his fire-gold, flickering hair,  
 In his blinding armor stand,  
 And the scales were in his hand:  
 Mighty were they, and full well  
 They could poise both heaven and  
 hell.

"Angel," asked I humbly then,  
 "Weighest thou the souls of men?  
 That thine office is, I know."  
 "Nay," he answered me, "not so  
 But I weigh the hope of Man  
 Since the power of choice began,  
 In the world, of good or ill."  
 Then I waited and was still.

In one scale I saw him place  
 All the glories of our race,  
 Cups that lit Belshazzar's feast,  
 Gems, the lightning of the East,  
 Kublai's sceptre, Cæsar's sword,  
 Many a poet's golden word,  
 Many a skill of science, vain  
 To make men as gods again.

In the other scale he threw  
 Things regardless, outcast, few,  
 Martyr-ash, arena sand,  
 Of St. Francis' cord a strand,  
 Beechen cups of men whose need  
 Fasted that the poor might feed,  
 Disillusions and despairs  
 Of young saints with grief-grayed  
 hairs,  
 Broken hearts that brake for Man.

Marvel through my pulses ran  
 Seeing then the beam divine



Swiftly on this hand decline,  
While Earth's splendor and renown  
Mounted light as thistle-down.

## A VALENTINE.

LET others wonder what fair face  
Upon their path shall shine,  
And, fancying half, half hoping, trace  
Some maiden shape of tenderest grace  
To be their Valentine.

Let other hearts with tremor sweet  
One secret wish enshrine  
That Fate may lead their happy feet  
Fair Julia in the lane to meet  
To be their Valentine.

But I, far happier, am secure;  
I know the eyes benign,  
The face more beautiful and pure  
Than Fancy's fairest portraiture  
That mark my Valentine.

More than when first I singled thee,  
This only prayer is mine, —  
That, in the years I yet shall see,  
As, darling, in the past, thou 'lt be  
My happy Valentine.

## AN APRIL BIRTHDAY—AT SEA.

ON this wild waste, where never blossom  
came,  
Save the white wind-flower in the  
billow's cap,  
Or those pale disks of momentary flame,  
Loose petals dropped from Dian's  
careless lap,  
What far fetched influence all my  
fancy fills,  
With singing birds and dancing  
daffodils?

Why, 't is her day whom jocund April  
brought,  
And who brings April with her in her  
eyes;  
It is her vision lights my lonely thought,  
Even as a rose that opes its hushed  
surprise  
In sick men's chambers, with its  
glowing breath  
Plants Summer at the glacier edge  
of Death.

Gray sky, sea gray as mossy stones on  
graves; —

Anon comes April in her jollity;  
And dancing down the bleak vales 'tween  
the waves,

Makes them green glades for all her  
flowers and me.

The gulls turn thrushes, charmed  
are sea and sky

By magic of my thought, and know  
not why.

Ah, but I know, for never April's shine,  
Nor passion gust of rain, nor all her  
flowers

Scattered in haste, were seen so sudden  
fine

As she in various mood, on whom the  
powers

Of happiest stars in fair conjunction  
smiled

To bless the birth of April's darling  
child.

## LOVE AND THOUGHT.

WHAT hath Love with Thought to do?  
Still at variance are the two.  
Love is sudden, Love is rash,  
Love is like the levin flash,  
Comes as swift, as swiftly goes,  
And his mark as surely knows.

Thought is lumpish, Thought is slow,  
Weighing long 'tween yes and no;  
When dear Love is dead and gone,  
Thought comes creeping in anon,  
And, in his deserted nest,  
Sits, to hold the crowner's quest.

Since we love, what need to think?  
Happiness stands on a brink  
Whence too easy 't is to fall  
Whither 's no return at all;  
Have a care, half-hearted lover,  
Thought would only push her over!

## THE NOBLER LOVER.

IF he be a nobler lover, take him!  
You in you I seek, and not myself;  
Love with men's what women choose to  
make him,  
Seraph strong to soar, or fawn-eyed  
elf:

All I am or can, your beauty gave it,  
Lifting me a moment nigh to you,  
And my bit of heaven, I fain would save  
it —  
Mine I thought it was, I never knew.

What you take of me is yours to serve  
you,  
All I give, you gave to me before ;  
Let him win you! If I but deserve  
you,  
I keep all you grant to him and more :  
You shall make me dare what others  
dare not,  
You shall keep my nature pure as  
snow,  
And a light from you that others share  
not  
Shall transfigure me where'er I go.

Let me be your thrall! However lowly  
Be the bondsman's service I can do,  
Loyalty shall make it high and holy ;  
Naught can be unworthy, done for  
you.  
Men shall say, " A lover of this fashion  
Such an icy mistress well beseems."  
Women say, " Could we deserve such  
passion,  
We might be the marvel that he  
dreams."

ON HEARING A SONATA OF BEE-  
THOVEN'S PLAYED IN THE NEXT  
ROOM.

UNSEEN Musician, thou art sure to  
please,  
For those same notes in happier days  
I heard  
Poured by dear hands that long have  
never stirred  
Yet now again for me delight the  
keys :  
Ah me, to strong illusions such as these  
What are Life's solid things? The  
walls that gird  
Our senses, lo, a casual scent or word  
Levels, and 't is the soul that hears  
and sees!  
Play on, dear girl, and many be the  
years  
Ere some grayhaired survivor sit like  
me  
And, for thy largess pay a meed of tears  
Unto another who, beyond the sea

Of Time and Change, perhaps not sadly  
hears  
A music in this verse undreamed by  
thee!

VERSES.

INTENDED TO GO WITH A POSSET DISH  
TO MY DEAR LITTLE GODDAUGHTER,  
1882.

In good old times, which means, you  
know,  
The time men wasted long ago,  
And we must blame our brains or mood  
If that we squander seems less good,  
In those blest days when wish was act,  
And fancy dreamed itself to fact,  
Godfathers used to fill with guineas  
The cups they gave their pickaninnies,  
Performing functions at the chrisam  
Not mentioned in the Catechism.  
No millionaire, poor I fill up  
With wishes my more modest cup,  
Though had I Amalthea's horn  
It should be hers the newly born.  
Nay, shudder not! I should bestow it  
So brimming full she could n't blow it.  
Wishes are n't horses : true, but still  
There are worse roadsters than good-  
will.

And so I wish my darling health,  
And just to round my couplet, wealth,  
With faith enough to bridge the chasm  
'TwiXt Genesis and Protoplasm,  
And bear her o'er life's current vex't  
From this world to a better next,  
Where the full glow of God puts out  
Poor reason's farthing candle, Doubt.  
I've wished her healthy, wealthy, wise,  
What more can godfather devise?  
But since there's room for countless  
wishes  
In these old-fashioned posset dishes,  
I'll wish her from my plenteous store  
Of those commodities two more,  
Her father's wit, veined through and  
through  
With tenderness that Watts (but whew!  
Celia's aflame, I mean no stricture  
On his Sir Josh-surpassing picture) —  
I wish her next, and 't is the soul  
Of all I've dropt into the bowl,  
Her mother's beauty — nay, but two  
So fair at once would never do.  
Then let her but the half possess,  
Troy was besieged ten year; for less.

Now if there's any truth in Darwin,  
 And we from what was, all we are  
 win,  
 I simply wish the child to be  
 A sample of Heredity,  
 Enjoying to the full extent  
 Life's best, the Unearned Increment  
 Which Fate her Godfather to flout  
 Gave *him* in legacies of gout.  
 Thus, then, the cup is duly filled ;  
 Walk steady, dear, lest all be spilled.

## ON A BUST OF GENERAL GRANT.

"This poem is the last, so far as is known, written by Mr. Lowell. He laid it aside for revision, leaving two of the verses incomplete. In a pencilled fragment of the poem the first verse appears as follows:—

'Strong, simple, silent, such are Nature's Laws.'

In the final copy, from which the poem is now printed, the verse originally stood:—

'Strong, steadfast, silent are the laws.'

but 'steadfast' is crossed out, and 'simple' written above.

"A similar change is made in the ninth verse of the stanza, where 'simpleness' is substituted for 'steadfastness.' The change from 'steadfast' to 'simple' was not made, probably through oversight, in the first verse of the second stanza. There is nothing to indicate what epithet Mr. Lowell would have chosen to complete the first verse of the third stanza. C. E. N."

STRONG, simple, silent are the [steadfast] laws  
 That sway this universe, of none withstood,  
 Unconscious of man's outcries or applause,  
 Or what man deems his evil or his good;  
 And when the Fates ally them with a cause  
 That wallows in the sea-trough and seems lost,  
 Drifting in danger of the reefs and sands  
 Of shallow counsels, this way, that way,  
 tost,  
 Strength, silence, simpleness, of these three strands  
 They twist the cable shall the world hold fast  
 To where its anchors clutch the bed-rock of the Past.

Strong, simple, silent, therefore such was he  
 Who helped us in our need ; the eternal law  
 That who can saddle Opportunity  
 Is God's elect, though many a mortal flaw  
 May minish him in eyes that closely see,  
 Was verified in him : what need we say  
 Of one who made success where others failed,  
 Who, with no light save that of common day,  
 Struck hard, and still struck on till Fortune quailed,  
 But that (so sift the Norns) a desperate van  
 Ne'er fell at last to one who was not wholly man.

A face all prose where Time's [benignant] haze  
 Softens no raw edge yet, nor makes all fair  
 With the beguiling light of vanished days ;  
 This is relentless granite, bleak and bare,  
 Roughhewn, and scornful of æsthetic phrase ;  
 Nothing is here for fancy, naught for dreams,  
 The Present's hard uncompromising light  
 Accents all vulgar outlines, flaws, and seams,  
 Yet vindicates some pristine natural right  
 O'ertopping that hereditary grace  
 Which marks the gain or loss of some time-fondled race.

So Marius looked, methinks, and Cromwell so,  
 Not in the purple born, to those they led  
 Nearer for that and costlier to the foe,  
 New moulders of old forms, by nature bred  
 The exhaustless life of manhood's seeds to show,  
 Let but the ploughshare of portentous times  
 Strike deep enough to reach them where they lie :  
 Despair and danger are their fostering climes,  
 And their best sun bursts from a stormy sky :



He was our man of men, nor would  
 abate  
 The utmost due manhood could claim  
 of fate.

Nothing ideal, a plain-people's man  
 At the first glance, a more deliberate ken  
 Finds type primeval, theirs in whose  
 veins ran

Such blood as quelled the dragon in his  
 den,  
 Made harmless fields, and better worlds  
 began :

He came grim-silent, saw and did the  
 deed

That was to do ; in his master-grip  
 Our sword flashed joy ; no skill of words  
 could breed

Such sure conviction as that close-  
 clamped lip ;

He slew our dragon, nor, so seemed it,  
 knew

He had done more than any simplest  
 man might do.

Yet did this man, war-tempered, stern  
 as steel

Where steel opposed, prove soft in civil  
 sway ;

The hand hilt-hardened had lost tact to  
 feel

The world's base coin, and glozing  
 knives made prey

Of him and of the entrusted Common-  
 weal ;

So Truth insists and will not be denied.  
 We turn our eyes away, and so will

Fame,

As if in his last battle he had died  
 Victor for us and spotless of all blame,  
 Doer of hopeless tasks which praters  
 shirk,

One of those still plain men that do the  
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